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# The QCCer

The Newsletter of the Quarter Century Club

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## New President says Hello

### FROM THE OLD STOMPING GROUNDS

We'd like to be more definite, but the old stomping grounds seem to be in a state of flux. Gone: **Jeff Morales**, **Brent Felker** and **Dennis Trujillo**. Acting **Tony Harris** (former Chief Deputy) Director, **Mike Leonardo**, (formerly of District 6) Deputy for Project Development, **Bruce Behrens** (formerly of Legal) Chief Deputy, and **Bimla Reinhart** (formerly of Right of Way) Deputy for External Affairs.

Sources tell us that no decisions have been made after the recent passage of the \$15 billion bond issue to return any funds to the Highway Account from the General Fund – or to cancel plans for layoffs.

But there is talk that the department's financial picture will brighten fairly soon and if history is any guide, the department will be unprepared to put the money to work, order wide-scale overtime, go into panic hiring mode and start putting out projects with insufficiently completed plans.

Remember Ronald Reagan's commission that recommended the wholesale marketing of "excess properties" that resulted in the sale of rights-of-way for badly-needed projects that never got built because there were now houses, hospitals, schools and shopping centers on the alignment?

They're at it again, with the California Performance Review, to "make government more efficient and responsive to the public."

About 150 state employees will make up teams to recommend changes to "reduce costs and increase productivity throughout state government."

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

#### Confronting that Old To Do List

This is my introduction to most of you, since I have not yet made the rounds to all the districts for an in-person introduction. Some of you from Districts 1, 2 and 11 may remember me but that's not likely in many other districts.

I'm newly retired from just over 40 years of service and am looking forward to the newfound free time to travel and meet those in all the other QCC districts. I now



see clearly the story told by so many others who retired and say that they can't figure how they ever found time for work at Caltrans when they were still employed.

With each day, my 'to do' list grows longer.

The past President, George Gray, left some pretty big shoes to fill, and they'll take some growing into when I can track him down and learn some of his wisdom. And since I don't have any more to add I'll stop before I make trouble.



-- "Butch" Biendara

**QCCer**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

President's Message.....Page 1  
 In Memoriam.....Page 2  
 Secretary Treasurer's Message.....Page 3  
 Transportation Foundation Matters.....Page 3  
 History of Caltrans Directors.....Page 3  
 District 1.....Page 4-5  
 District 2.....Page 6  
 District 3.....Page 6-7  
 District 4.....Page 8-9  
 District 5.....Page 9-10  
 District 6.....Page 10-11  
 District 7.....Page 11  
 District 8.....Page 11-13  
 District 9.....Page 14  
 District 10.....Page -15  
 District 11.....Page 16-18  
 Central District.....Page 19-22  
 Event Calendar.....Page 22  
 Officers.....Page 23

**IN MEMORIAM**

*We extend our sympathy to family members and loved ones of our fallen colleagues in their time of loss*

Name	District	Date
Rosalee Skidmore Walls	1	November 25, 2003
Charles "Chuck" Pavlich	1	November 29, 2003
Howard Blumer	1	December 21, 2003
Lorna Cavender	1	January 22, 2004
Lee Beagle	1	December, 2003
Steve Kakos	4	November 1, 2003
Bob Robbins	4	December 22, 2003
Wes von Ronn	4	January 31, 2004
E. Keith Rice	5	December 4, 2003
Lavina M. Buss	5	January 27, 2004
Joan Carey	5	January 31, 2004
F. Mike Keller	5	February 3, 2004
Betty Nauber	5	February 8, 2004
Helen Rowe	5	February 17, 2004
Jim Horton	8	February, 2004
Woody Antley	8	December, 2003
Millard Maynard	8	December 2003
Jack Edell	9	January 6, 2004
Ed Nahhas	9	January 3, 2004
Jane Wells	9	January 18, 2004
Rose Vierra	10	December 4, 2003
John Weigand	11	February 23, 2004

**SECRETARY/TREASURER'S MESSAGE**

**A**fter dropping 43 members for three years' delinquency in dues payment and accounting for recent deaths and new members, we now have a total membership of 1,761. Of these, 1,258 are paying members; 355 are delinquent, owing a total amount of \$4,170. The remainder are honorary members who are not required to pay dues. With our annual budget of about \$15,000, we are still breaking about even. However, if printing and/or mailing costs increase we may need to make some adjustments.

As stated in previous issues, it is necessary that I retire from the office of Secretary/Treasurer for health reasons. The constitution provides that any employee or retiree of the California Department of Transportation may hold this office whether eligible or not for Quarter Century Club membership. Please assist our officers in providing for my replacement.

-- George Ellis

**Dues Due?**

Do you know when your QCC dues are due? If you don't, simply look at the mailing label on your recent issue of the QCCer. The date shown indicates the last year for which you have paid. Remember, unless you're paid up to 12/13/03 or later, you are delinquent. Dues are \$10 per year and may be paid to your Chapter Director or directly to the QCC Treasurer:

George Ellis  
 800 Sirocco Drive  
 Yuba City, CA 95991

*"The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending; and have the two as close together as possible."*

~George Burns

## TRANSPORTATION FOUNDATION MATTERS

The California Transportation Foundation has mailed its annual solicitation to QCC members for donations. Heinz Heckerroth, the foundation's Executive Officer, thanks in advance those who help to support the foundation's objectives. Current activities include:

District 5 Earthquake Victim Relief

Memorial to Michael Feliciano, a District 5 accident victim

Sponsorship of this year's Caltrans Worker Memorial Ceremony in Capitol Park on April 8th.

The TRANNY Awards Luncheon May 12th at the Hotel Sterling in downtown Sacramento.

The August 18th Charity Golf Tournament at Winchester Country Club, Meadow Vista

CTF is asking for tax-deductible contributions to support an endowment of \$10,000 for four annual awards to be given at its TRANNY Awards Banquet in May.

CTF, in cooperation with Caltrans, recognizes four outstanding Caltrans managers each year. In 2004, CTF and Caltrans are adding the Emerson Rhyner Award to recognize an outstanding non-engineering manager. Candidates may come from any non-engineering discipline such as surveys, architecture, legal, planning landscape architecture, right of way, administration, maintenance, rail, aeronautics or mass transportation. Two awards – the Purcell and Moskowitz Awards – have been presented since 1990. Two years ago, an award was added in the name of for Deputy Director James Roberts.

CTF pays the cost of plaques and other incidental expenses; the selection process is administered by Caltrans.

Make checks payable to "CTF" and designate "Caltrans Manager Awards Fund."

Mail to: CTF  
P.O. Box 163453  
Sacramento CA 95816

## A Short History of Caltrans District Directors by George E. Gray, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

### Part I

For the purposes of this writing, the organization now known as the Department of Transportation -- Caltrans -- had its birth in October 1911 with the formation of the initial seven divisions (now districts) and the California Highway Commission. The initial seven divisions were identified by Roman numerals. Later, in January of 1924, District VIII, San Bernardino, District IX, Bishop, and District X, Stockton were carved out of the original divisions, which were now designated as districts.

In charge of the initial seven divisions were "competent and experienced engineers" who took office on January 2, 1912. Since that time, well over 100 individuals have held the title of Division Engineer, District Engineer, or District Director of Transportation.

The seven initial Division Engineers were:

**Division I**—Francis G. Somner, with division office at Willits in the Mercantile Building.

**Division II**—T. A. Bedford, with the initial division office at Redding in the C.R. Briggs Building but moved to Dunsmuir in 1912.

**Division III**—W. S. Caruthers, with division office at Sacramento in the Forum Building.

**Division IV**—Arthur D. Loder (who was replaced in 1912 by W. Lewis Clark), with division office at San Francisco in the Rialto Building.

**Division V**—Walter C. Howe (who was replaced in 1912 by Lester H. Gibson), with division office at San Luis Obispo in the Union National Bank Building.

**Division VI**—J. B. Woodson, with division office at Fresno in the Forsythe Building.

**Division VII**—W. Lewis Clark (who was replaced by W. W. Patch in 1912 with Clark becoming the Division Engineer in San Francisco), with division office at Los Angeles in the Union Oil Building.

In 1924, three districts were added, as follows:



**Johns**, was auditioning in San Francisco for the male choral group, the Chanticleers, so they went down, saw a play and enjoyed breakfast with the family at the Cliff House. Ben was successful and now travels with the Chanticleers. In June they hosted their final annual party at their Philo resort with 70 friends and family including several Caltrans friends. After the party, they spent two days in Boomtown, did some gambling and played golf in Reno.

In September, they hosted the **Bob Kays**, **Joe Thomases** and **Lowell Allens** at Philo for a couple of days of eating, drinking and spirited conversation. In October, **Ben** and his son, **Marty**, went hunting in Siskiyou County with the **Dave Cranes**. No luck -- too dry -- and had to come home early due to a death in the family. Thank you, Ben, for sharing this.

I still get to see **Bob Kay's** mother, **Rusty**. Her husband -- Bob's dad -- was the Bridge Engineer stationed in District 1 for several years prior to his retirement. **Rusty** shared several stories of their highway adventures.

On the sad side, we lost several of our Caltrans/Division of Highways retired family. **Rosalee Skidmore Walls**, who was on the office staff in our Willow Creek Maintenance Station and District 1 Shop passed away November 25, 2003. **Charles "Chuck" Pavlich**, who retired as a Maintenance Superintendent, passed away November 29, 2003. **Howard Blumer**, retired Senior Engineer, died December 21, 2003 at 86. He was in the District 1 office from 1956 to retirement in 1980. **Lorna Cavender**, an Associate Caltrans Administrator, died on January 22, 2004, of heart failure. Lorna's passing probably hit us a bit harder since she had retired recently and many employees still had close memories of working with her. **Lee Beagle**, wife of retired District 1 engineer, **Jim Beagle**, also passed away in December. It was a delight to know all of them. Our deepest sympathy goes out to their families at this sad time.

We have some more retirement parties on the horizon. **Barbara Nichols** is retiring from the

District 1 Shop office and will have a party at the Wharfinger building on March 27, 2004. **John Sherman**, who retired as a Maintenance Superintendent, will have a party at the Scotia Park on May 15, 2004. We expect to have a great time at these parties.

I made it in to the District office in December in time to see several of our employees receive superior accomplishment awards and see **John Sherman** receive his 40-year service award. We don't see too many of those anymore.

I welcome any news from our members. Email me at [ahartin@cox.net](mailto:ahartin@cox.net).

-- Arlene Hartin

### Perks of Being Over 50

1. Kidnappers are not very interested in you
2. You are likely to be first hostage released
3. No one expects you to run into a burning building
4. People call at 9PM and ask, "Did I wake you?"
5. People no longer view you as a hypochondriac
6. There is nothing left to learn the hard way
7. Things you buy now won't wear out
8. You can eat dinner at 4 pm
9. You can live without sex but not without glasses
10. You enjoy arguments about pension plans
11. You have a party and the neighbors don't even realize it
12. You no longer think of speed limits as a challenge
13. You quit trying to hold your stomach in, no matter who walks into the room
14. You sing along with elevator music
15. Your eyes won't get much worse
16. Your investment in health insurance is finally beginning to pay off
17. Your joints are more accurate meteorologist that the national weather service
18. Your secrets are safe with your friends because they can't remember them either
19. Your supply of brain cells is finally down to manageable size
20. You can't remember who sent you this list

## THE HAPS IN DISTRICT 2

District 2's first luncheon meeting for the 2004 year was held Friday, February 20, at the Upper Crust Pizza. Thirty people attended to hear Deputy District Director, **Kathy Russell**, who filled in as the scheduled speaker for Director **Brian Crane** who, because of the state's financial crisis, had to attend a meeting in Siskiyou County. When Mr. Crane's secretary called to advise me of his cancellation, I suggested Kathy Russell as she had worked in the district during the prior crisis when we were all still working. Her answers to questions made us think retired life isn't so bad after all.

**Jerry Drennan** reports that he and his wife **Terry** have just returned from their annual three-week vacation in Hawaii. Jerry says the weather was perfect, but golf was just as bad as ever!

**John Strode** and his wife **Jane** were in attendance for their first visit in some time, as they have spent most of each year between 1993 and 2003 in China. John said, "It has been fun and challenging to buy Bibles in the government-approved Christian Church, give them away and still stay in China. We plan to return to Beijing in July and will probably stay for nine to 10 months. A lot of kids there call us "Mom" and "Dad" and we just can't leave them."

**John Haner** says "If anyone is interested in the old Safety Bulletins -- the "Guardian" -- I have placed my fairly complete set in the Shasta Historical Society in the Downtown Mall in Redding. Also there is a collection of the Old Highway Magazines published by the California Division of Highways.

We received the following note from **Richard Burns** when he sent his dues for the year: "Gary **Pursell's** presentation regarding the new San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge was excellent. **Marge** and I were impressed by both the scope of the project and Gary's narrative, photos, and diagrams.

\*Note: Gary Pursell has been assigned for one year to District 04 to work on the Bay Bridge Replacement Project. This program should be seen by more of the public, as it is very informative.

We were pleased to see several members who had traveled some distance to attend our meeting. These included **Jake** and **Geneva Harris** from the Oroville area, **Ray Porterfield** from Mt. Shasta and **Chuck Evans** from Burney.

-- Janet Briggs

## THE HAPS IN DISTRICT 3

Congratulations . . . if you are reading this, you obviously have survived the holidays. My own were enjoyable. However, there are some parts I would just as soon not repeat. Many of our stalwarts must be out of the area but I have seen a few the past several weeks: both **Nolan Finley** and **Jim Pease** have been in and out of Marysville's Denny's. **Nolan's** brother, **Verne Finley**, **Kenny Morgan**, **Barbara Fortey** -- **Pete's** widow--and **Marge** and **Ken Johnson** were at the Bonanza Inn in Yuba City.

Recently, I dropped by St. John's Episcopal Church of Marysville with a check for the food shelf and was waylaid by the "Carpenter of St. John's." No, not JC, but PL Jr. -- **Perry Lowden** -- who dragooned me into acting as his rear chairman as he laid out the new positions of the Cross on the interior walls of the nave. **Perry** was recently re-elected to the Parish Vestry. With his delicate sense of diplomacy, laying out the Positions of the Cross and dealing with new Bishop of New Hampshire should be a piece of cake.

The first of the month (March), while having coffee and pastry at La Bou -- the reincarnated Posey's (the infamous bar and restaurant across O Street from Caltrans' HQ in Sacramento) -- I was seated next to some younger CT engineers, one of whom was **Dick Satoff's** son. He informed me **Dick** had passed away a couple of years ago. Another fellow had spent some time in 04 Construction. We had several enjoyable minutes recalling dear old **Joe Brown**, ex-District 4 director, and speculating on his prospective adventures in the afterlife. He will have to be able to assume many improbable anatomical

positions to accomplish our fantasies. It would be impossible for a normal human. However, perhaps the one thing Joe was never accused of was normal...

After my snack I went to the offices of the CSEA Civil Service and Retirees' Divisions. I bring this up because it affects all of us, active and retired, management, supervisors and rank and file. At CSEA's General Council in October/ November of 2003, a real power revolution took place. The CSD elected leadership and the Civil Service delegates wrested the power to negotiate wages, hours and conditions of work away from CSEA President Perry Kenny, his cohorts on the Board of Directors and senior staff labor negotiators. Now, they have or are in the final stages of affiliating directly with the million-member plus aggressive Service Employees International Union. Arnold is not going to find many willing givebacks there.

In my personal opinion, unfortunately for us retirees, we will get more of the same from that bald headed, grey bearded, blue-rinsed coterie of cronies hysterically misidentified as our leadership. That outfit is still fighting the French and Indian War.

Membership in the Commonwealth Club took me into San Francisco several times in February: first, a buffet supper in a Chinatown hotel and viewing the New Year's parade from their balcony, second, to Santa Clara for a luncheon reception for Madeline Albright, President Clinton's Secretary of State, and three -- the grand finale -- a reception at the Ritz Carlton in San Francisco for Walter Cronkite.

The trips to and from the Bay area were events in themselves, but how about that magnificent structure across the Carquinez Strait, especially when seen lighted, the work on the foundation piers of the eastern part of the Bay Bridge and the developing north and south approaches to the Benicia Bridge. I still feel a great surge of satisfaction at having been a part of Caltrans for 40 years.

Life membership certificates for **Elmo C. Meister**, **Charles E. Laine** and **Roy T. Phillips** will be in the mail this week.

Sorry folks, still dragging on the survey. Maybe next week

Breakfast is at Perko's in Yuba City (no contact) on the third Wednesday of every month at 0700 (ye gods)

**Folks:** I recognize there are more "I's" in this missive than in a picket fence. If you don't want to hear about me, write to me so I can write about you.

**News from Placerville**, courtesy of the indomitable **Keith Maggini**:

The semi-annual get-together of retired Caltrans employees is scheduled for Thursday, May 20, 2004 at **Daryl Hansen's** Hideaway at 2012 Union Ridge Road in Placerville. Instructions on how to get there are available by calling any of the numbers listed at the end of this note. The event, a potluck, will start at 11 am. The following guidelines apply to the potluck. Last name beginning with:

A to M Bring a salad

N to Z Bring bread or desert

Things to bring are: meat for the barbecue or whatever else you wish to eat, place settings, drinks and chairs. Barbecues will be furnished. This is not a stag event, so spouses and guests are welcome. Plenty of parking spaces are available. For further information, please feel free to call one of the following people: **Doug Becker** at (530) 622-1665 **Jerry Hamm** at (530) 622-8030 or **Darrell Hansen** at (530) 622-6255.

**Another noteworthy item to report:** Retirees get together every Tuesday at 8 A.M. for breakfast at **Carrows** on Main Street, Placerville. A lot of tall tales are related, some of them of a questionable nature, so your attendance is welcome to dispute some of these tales and get your two cents in.

**A warning:** don't be the first to tell your experiences, as you will most likely be topped. The usual attendees include **Doug Becker**, **Bill Byers**, **Jerry Hamm**, **Darrell Hansen**, **John Krek** and **Keith Maggini**. All retirees are welcome.

-- *John Pennebaker and Steve Maggini*

*I never hated a man enough to give his diamonds back.*

~Zsa Zsa Gabor

## THE HAPS IN DISTRICT 4

**M**y apologies to **Bethel Rogers** and her husband **Jim** for misspelling their last name in the last issue of The Cue See Seer. It's **Rogers** -- not **Rodgers**! No wonder **Roy Rodgers** never answered my fan letters. All I can say is that my proofreader (i.e. wife) was out of town visiting our youngest daughter in Huntington Beach so our quality control slipped a bit. **Bethel's** husband **Jim** had shoulder surgery in February. We hope things went well and that he'll be back at racquetball soon. Afterwards they were to be off to Scottsdale, Arizona in March to see the SF Giants at Spring Training **Bethel** asks about QCC members **Carl Bianchini** and **Glenn Behm**. Let us know.

**Keith Marolt** and his wife wish everyone a happy and healthy 2004. They have recently moved and their new address and phone number are:

280 Island Ave., #202

Reno, NV 89501

Ph# (775) 324-5764

**Ted Nicou** sends his best regards to everyone. He's been living in San Jose since August 2001; he moved there to be with his brother who was suffering from emphysema. His brother, who had been retired for 10 years after a 30-year career as a lawyer for State Farm Insurance, died in October 2001. Ted had a 17-day trip in hot weather to Greece last August to visit his cousins in Athens where he attended his niece's wedding and enjoyed himself. He also had a chance to visit Volos, his parents' home. Being a former transportation engineer, he couldn't help noticing the superb new freeway that goes to the Athens Airport and the many roads being widened for the upcoming Olympics.

**George Samoulides** informs me that QCC Member **Steve Kakos** died on November 1, 2003 in San Jose at the age of 90. He is survived by his daughter **Carmelita Coleman** (Harold), two granddaughters, a grandson and 5 great-grandchildren. **Steve** was born in Providence, Ohio, served in WWII, received his engineering degree from San Jose State and worked for Caltrans until he retired.

**Russ Lightcap** sends his regards. He lives with his family in Rossmoor, an unincorporated development in Orange County bounded by I-405 on the south and I-605 on the west. His daughter lives about a mile away. One grandson attends the San Francisco School of the Arts; the other is an architect in New York. Both visited during the holidays.

**Bob Cashion** spent the holidays at his mother-in-law's in northern Germany. The weather unfortunately was cold, wet and windy -- not the best for touring.

QCC member **Bill Shoemaker** stopped by in July while he was attending his BattleGround High School reunion.

Bob also passed on news that his former squad leader in south bay design when he first came to work for the Division of Highways in District 4, **Bob Robbins**, died on December 22, 2003 at 87. When Cashion moved to Walnut Creek in 1977, **Robbins** was his neighbor and they were in the same vanpool until **Robbins** retired in the early 1980's. **Bob Robbins** worked for the Division of Highways/ Caltrans from 1946 to 1982. He is survived by his wife, **Elvera**, to whom he was married for 64 years. He is also survived by a daughter, a son and three granddaughters.

**Brian White** has just completed 25 years of state service and joined the Quarter Century Club. He sends word that former District 4 Supervisor of Drafting Services, **Wes von Ronn** died on January 31, 2004 at the age of 85. **Wes** had been married for 53 years. He retired in 1979.

At the time of my typing, my wife's mother has finally moved into her condominium in Rossmoor in Walnut Creek. The time has been occupied unpacking more than 270 boxes ranging in size from 1.5 to 3 cu. ft. and getting ready to put up more than 100 pictures. The view from her unit of Mount Diablo is tremendous. She has already been visited by the local deer and a group of four turkeys who came pecking at her patio door.

With regard to my family, our oldest wayward daughter is finishing her MBA at Michigan State and is looking at jobs in the Bay Area. She visited us for a



week in February. Our youngest daughter, the kindergarten teacher in Huntington Beach, is casting her eyes again toward Texas since it appears her school district will go through another disruption because of the state's budget crisis. Both are looking for my wife to help them pack if and when they move since she did such a wonderful job for her mother. My wife is looking for a place to hide.

-- Paul Hensley

## THE HAPS IN DISTRICT 5

**W**e saw the first California poppies today along Highway 227, which means spring is just around the corner.

The future of Caltrans and other state agencies hinges on the outcome of the March 2 election. By the time you read this, we'll know if the governor's bond measures were successful, and we can relax or tighten our belts even more. In the meantime, formal notices have gone out to more than 1,000 employees, although the target figure for lay offs is closer to 600.

Soon these employees will receive information on their seniority scores, and the lay off process will begin. Some have already taken leaves of absence or accepted other employment. It is sad to see friends leave under these circumstances.

San Luis Obispo County had quite a "shake-up" just before Christmas when we were rattled by a 6.5 earthquake centered near San Simeon. Most of the damage occurred in the North County in the cities of Paso Robles, Templeton and Atascadero. Our highway structures were inspected and found to have survived in good shape. Highway 46 between Cambria and Paso Robles had significant slides and slippage, and the maintenance crews worked most of Christmas week to restore the traveled way. Some of District 5 employees had damage to their homes in varying degrees. Thanks to everyone who donated to the California Transportation Foundation, which has provided financial assistance.

CTF is also accepting donations to its Worker Memorial Fund in memory of **Michael Feliciano**, who was killed at the end of February. He and

another maintenance employee were returning to the yard after setting up cones to warn of flooding on 101 near Chualar. Another vehicle crossed the median and struck **Mike's** vehicle. A leadworker, he had worked out of Salinas maintenance for 11 years. He will be remembered as a dedicated employee and a devoted family man. His name will be added to the Worker Memorial at the District 5 office.

We lost other Caltrans friends this winter: **E. Keith Rice** (12/4/03), **Lavina M. Buss** (1/27/04), **Joan Carey**, wife of **Tom** (1/31/04), **F. Mike Keller** (2/3/04), **Betty Neuber**, widow of **George** (2/8/04), and **Helen Rowe** (2/17/04). They were all part of our Division of Highways and Caltrans family for many years, and they will be missed.

In February, the History Channel presented a program about the building of the Pacific Coast Highway as part of its Modern Marvels series. Our section of Route 1 was featured, and Caltrans employees **Dave Galarza**, **Bob Pavlik** and **John Duffy** were interviewed about various aspects of the highway and bridges.

**Attention Caltrans golfers:** The 2004 State tournament is scheduled for May 20-21 at Los Serranos Golf and Country Club in Chino Hills. The deadline for submitting our entry form is April 23. District 5 golfers should contact **Mike Giuliano** at 805-542-4606.

We had an e-mail note from **Paul Bohrer**, saying he had just returned from fishing the Rogue River in Oregon, where the steelhead are "humongous." **Paul** says he will have been retired 20 years in October —where has the time gone?

**Bill Cotnam's** Christmas letter said, "This has been a wonderful year. My health has improved, my traveling has expanded and my daughter and granddaughter have been wonderful." **Bill's** journeys included Las Vegas, Grand Canyon, the Far East, Micronesia, and Guam. His next trip will be to Thailand, Philippines and maybe Bali. When he's not traveling, **Bill** keeps busy supporting athletics at SLO High School and running in local races.

**Jerry Laumer** recently stopped by the office for a visit. He is keeping busy, visiting family and traveling between homes in California and New York.

**Bick Moe** reported that **Harold Rossier** got a good shakeup on his birthday from the quake. **Bob Treece, Harold** and **Bick** met the next day for their birthday breakfast to tell wild stories. Bick says, "Hats off to the Cuesta Grade project—it's wonderful". (We agree completely. Travel over the grade is now a pleasant experience, thanks to RE **Tim Campbell** and his staff. Did you know there is now a tunnel for bicyclists near the south entrance to Stagecoach Road?)

The **Copelands** enjoyed a weeklong trip on the American Queen in February. The cruise began in New Orleans, and they visited Oak Alley, St. Francisville, Natchez, Vicksburg, and Baton Rouge before returning to New Orleans. They were able to see a daytime Mardi Gras parade down St. Charles Avenue, and can report that most of the folks around them were very well-behaved. (We understand the nighttime parades are another story.)

Please drop us a line during the year and let us know what's happening in your neck of the woods.

-- *Kathy Copeland*

### **The Buffalo Theory of Beer Drinking** as explained by **Cliff Clavin, of Cheers:**

"Well ya see, Normie, it's like this... A herd of buffalo can move only as fast as the slowest buffalo. When the herd is hunted, the slowest and weakest ones at the back are killed first. This natural selection is good for the herd as a whole, because the general speed and health of the whole group keeps improving by the regular killing of the weakest members. In much the same way, the human brain can only operate as fast as the slowest brain cells. Excessive intake of alcohol, as we know, kills brain cells. But naturally, it attacks the slowest and weakest brain cells first. In this way, regular consumption of beer eliminates the weaker brain cells, making the brain faster and more efficient! That's why you feel smarter after a few beers."

## THE HAPS IN DISTRICT 6

**Martin Tresidder** spent a month in the Arizona desert in January. Even though it was quite cool and windy, it was still mostly enjoyable. He'll spend anywhere from six weeks to two months on the Oregon and Washington coast this summer visiting friends and relatives. In April he'll join the bunch at the annual Cedar Grove hunting/fishing trip (better known for the partying, drinking and swapping of large tales. I would sure like to hear from someone as to who attends this year.

The District 6 annual spring luncheon will be held May 20th at the Piccadilly Inn Airport at 11:30 am. A flyer is forthcoming.

For those of you who remember **Perry Anderson** in District 6 Maintenance Department, here's an update:

"Yes that was a long time ago. I retired in 1982. **Teresa** and I sold out lock, stock & barrel and moved to Grants Pass, Oregon in August of 2003. The heat finally became too much and we wanted to be close to our only son, Don, who recently retired from Pelican Bay Prison near Crescent City. Now it's January 2004 and Grants Pass is beginning to feel like home. The ice and snow almost remind me of old times at Pinehurst and Shaver Lake, although not nearly as severe. It is especially nice to be near our son and the grand and great grand children. Also, I have two siblings in Washington who will be more convenient to visit.

"In December I had a four-way heart bypass and am recovering nicely. **Teresa** had a successful knee replacement last year and is recovering nicely too. Otherwise we are doing reasonably well and the climate change from Fresno to Grants Pass will be better for my breathing and congestion problems.

"I had a long and enjoyable career in Caltrans Maintenance starting in Mendota in 1957. After a short tenure in Visalia as an operator I moved to San Francisco (Daly City) as a leadworker. In 1964 I returned to Pinehurst as supervisor, then moved to Lemon Cove and Shaver Lake. I became ill with cancer and had to give up the heavy-duty mountain

work. I promoted to superintendent in Fresno and assumed the duties of District Equipment Manager. I retired in 1982 and we stayed in Fresno until August 2003. We have had a good 22 years of retirement, enjoying travel and associating with many friends.

"We wish good luck and health to all our friends. We will miss seeing you from time to time at retirements and other functions.

"We would enjoy seeing old friends and if you happen to be in the area please give us a call (541) 956-8580."

Everybody loves to know what's been going on. If any of the District 6 bunch want to send details of activities or any interesting stories for the QCCer, please contact Terry Littleton at 559-974-3885 or e-mail to: [tlittle777@aol.com](mailto:tlittle777@aol.com).

#### THE HAPS IN DISTRICT 7

The annual Quarter Century Club luncheon was held Saturday, December 13, 2003 at the New Otani Hotel. QCC Director Tom Almany presided over the luncheon, which was attended by more than 60 people. Caltrans District 7 Director Doug Failing was the keynote speaker. Using a model of the structure, he discussed the new District 7 building, currently rising across the street from the New Otani. Doug also discussed the current state of Caltrans.

-- Wally Rothbart

#### THE HAPS IN DISTRICT 8

District 8 QCCers held their annual dinner party in early December. **Taylor Smith** and **Marsha Lotze** were reelected as local director and secretary by acclamation.

MC Taylor notes that **John Cowgill** (Retired District 8 Deputy Director) was honored at his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday party this year, joining 11 other statewide QCC members aged 100 or more. **Tom Dwiggin** (R/W) at age 91 was the eldest DISTRICT 8 member in attendance at the meeting **Taylor** also noted the D8 QCC had given a cash donation in support of the

five District 8 employees burnt out during the recent fires in the San Bernardino area.

Honorary QCC membership certificates were given to **Evie (Anderson) Gruber** (Drafting Services), **Bob Pond** (Construction), **Eleanor Campbell** (District 8 Phone Operator), **Barney Chapman** (Lab), and also to members not present including **Juan Ramirez** (Drafting), **Peter Treas** (Maintenance), and **John Wollard** (Right of Way).

Notes from the meeting included regrets by **Tom Brannick** (PS&E) celebrating his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, as well as **Dan Stachura** (Construction) and **Paul** (Administration) and **Mary Kirst**, attending Tom's party; **Roy S moot** (District 8 and Riverside County.) recovering from minor surgery; **Dick Saucier** (Construction) in hospice care; and **Grace Vinzens** (Administration) in Kaiser Hospital.

**Jan Daab** noted **Gil** (Design) was recovering from pneumonia, but enjoyed a Mexican Riviera cruise, particularly a dolphin encounter; **Evie Anderson** (Drafting), now retired 26 years, has moved to Colton from Sacramento and has visited 60 foreign countries and all 50 states; **Eleanor Campbell** has traveled to Italy and remains active in the Catholic Daughters, blood bank and CSEA; **Ernie** (Design) and **Kay Parke** completed their third Mississippi River cruise this year; **Dick** (DDD) and **Louise Haight** also went on the River Cruise and have celebrated living in the same house for 50 years; **Gil Wilcox** (Maintenance) visited their fifth great granddaughter in Grants Pass, Oregon; **Fred** (Right of Way Engineering) and **Melba Berry** noted he completed three years as an annuitant and during that time has been "fired" by two governors; **Jim** (Maintenance) and **Jan Geller** noted he has worked 40 years and had his first "accident" -- being hit by a car -- now recovering but off several months.

**Tom** (DDD R/W) and **Barbara Dwiggin** celebrated their 64<sup>th</sup> anniversary, traveling the world and seeing their children retire!; **Linda Grimes** (Planning) retired in November after a 45 year career, married to **Wes** 42 years, no one wanted custody of the kids (laughs), evacuated during the recent fires but no losses, and looking forward to her retirement

dinner January 17; **Bob Sassaman** (District Director in District 7 and Deputy District Director in District 8) now one year retired and spending time with grandsons and making wine, for which he won four medals at the Los Angeles County Fair, **Stan Liesiewicz** (District Director, District 8) retired three years and enjoying visiting friends and lunches; **Mary Reeder** (Right of Way) making trips with the local senior center; **John** (Design) and **Doris Estrada** enjoying 13 years of retirement and bowling toumeys in Las Vegas and Laughlin; **Les Franz** (Construction) enjoying bowling and golf; **Dick** (Lab) and **Hazel Longstreet** are better following her health problems which are fewer, dealing with mold in their condo, enduring evacuation during the recent fires and saving his golf clubs; **Loren** (DDD-Construction) **Barnett** still active at 86 (see below for further news); **Ken Olsen** (Design) now 14 years retired and praising his pacemaker; **Jim** (Traffic) and **JoAnn Balcom** still traveling to Alaska, **Morgan** (Program Management) and **Glenna Choate** moving to Fair Oaks, but still working for San Bernardino County following his retirement; **Carolyn Johns** (Administration) volunteering at the local hospital; **Ed** (DDD Design) and **Clarice Gritters** summering in Michigan with their family; **Bill** (DDD Maintenance) and **Shirley Feenstra** traveling to New Zealand, and motor homing the Oregon Trail; **Don Troy** (Surveys) left to form his own business in 1960, but still enjoys memories of District 8; **Frank Tracadas** (Surveys) living in Sun Lakes in Banning; **Don** (Maintenance) and **Janice** (Design) **Feenstra** still raising orchids, enjoying 18 grandchildren, and recovering from Don's recent rattlesnake bite; **Jean** (Stan-Const) **Griffith** spent part of the year in Switzerland, but had her car totaled at a red light here in the States; **Gerald** (Maintenance) and **Judy** (Administration) **Brown** marking 34 and 35 years service, had fun at a 40<sup>th</sup> class reunion and a Caribbean cruise....

**Gerry Lunt** sends a note that he's been retired for eight years and it hardly seems possible. He and wife, **Aida**, have been enjoying their grandchildren. They had an interesting trip to the Capitol in Washington, D.C., with granddaughter Emily, six, last

July/August. Gerry writes that they attended their daughter **Karen's** swearing-in ceremony. After 13 years as a high school English teacher in California, she changed careers to become a Federal Special Agent; which is what her husband also does. Secretary of State Collin Powell did the swearing in and gave a nice speech. "He is a wonderful man, strong family man, and much better looking in person than he appears on television."

Up on inviting family members and friends to come forward for photos, Mr. Powell noticed our granddaughter, **Emily**, having a tough time with her camera, so he swooped her up with his left arm, holding her as he did the swearing in with his right hand. It was an exciting experience for all of us.

The Capitol, museums, and monuments, etc. were something to behold, but be prepared for very strong security procedures to get in any of the buildings, including the museums.

Gerry also indicated that the State of Virginia, where they stayed with their daughter and son in law just across the Potomac River, is also beautiful. The freeways and expressways are nice, well-landscaped, etc. but the designs leave a lot to be desired compared to those in California, especially those around the Capitol. Decision sight distances at ramps and connectors are grossly inadequate. Still, the overriding concern is for preservation of historic places, rather than traffic needs.

**Loren Barnett** (Construction) and wife **Margaret** were featured in a front-page article in the San Bernardino Sun during February, which described in detail their leadership in providing housing for mentally ill individuals through the Barnett Harbinger House in Redlands. The **Barnetts** were deservedly commended for their efforts to assist individuals in need of good, safe housing as they deal with their health problems. A big bunch of roses to **Loren** and **Margaret** for this outstanding contribution to the community!

Had a nice note from **Geale Fitzpatrick**, ex-District 8 who retired from District 9, who describes cutting down a large Modesto Ash at his house. **Hank** (Construction) and **Marlene** (Admin)

**Klenzing** report son **Jeff** was chosen to summer in Pisa, Italy as an intern in a research program. **Hank** and **Marlene** were caught in the layoffs in the 70s and have traveled the world following Hank's work for Fluor... **Marlene** and daughter **Janelle** continue to live in Texas while Hank is working on projects in Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan and Qatar.

**George Plaas** (longtime Bridge Engineer in District 8) was honored at a retirement luncheon in January. George had 40+ years and was honored for contributions to the highway program and work on the Alaskan Pipeline and service in the army.

Roses to **Mary Bermudez** (Drafting Services), recovering from recent surgery and by all accounts doing well, to **Duane Sharp** (Construction) who was scheduled for major surgery in late February, to **Kay Parke** (**Ernie**-Design) also recovering from recent health problems and **Pat Hennessy** (PS&E), now recovered from surgery.

Sympathies to **Craig** (Program Management) and **Marsha Lotze** (Engineering Services) at the passing of his brother, **Alan "Buddy" Lotze**, a San Bernardino native and fixture around town most of his life. And to **Ernie** and **Kay Parke** at the passing of her sister **Jackie**. And to **Bob Jeanotte** (Traffic Electrical) at the passing of his brother **Bill**.

**Jim Horton** (Design) passed away in February. He retired from District 8 in 1977 and operated a survey business for many years thereafter. **Woody Antley** (Central Files) passed away in December. **Millard Maynard** (Construction and Traffic) passed away late last year.

**Lesley D. "Les" Wane** passed away on January 31, 2004, at the age of 97 in La Mesa, CA. Les began in District 8 following his graduation from Berkeley in 1929 and was the District 8 Design Engineer in the early 1950s. In 1955 he was promoted to a Supervising Highway Engineer in Headquarters Construction. He retired in 1961 and with his wife, **Alice**, moved to Vista, CA where he designed and built more than 100 tennis courts at various locations in Southern California. He was an avid tennis player and won the first National 60-and-over championship in Miami, Florida in 1965. In

1986 he won the National 80-and-over championship in San Diego. **Alice**, who died in 1997, won a National 40-and-over singles title in 1947. Both are listed in "Who's Who in Sports". **Les** is survived by his son, **Ronald**, of San Diego and granddaughter, **Janine Wane** of Somerville, Mass.

*Marsha Lotze*

## WD-40

In celebration of its 50th year, WD-40 recently conducted a contest to learn of its favorite uses by customers and fan club members.

In Georgia and Alabama, it "penetrates stuck bolts, lug nuts, and hose ends." In Florida, it cleans and removes "love bugs" from grills and bumpers. In California, it penetrates the bolts on the Golden Gate Bridge. And in New York, WD-40 protects the Statue of Liberty from the elements.

Other uses: Protects silver from tarnishing • Cleans and lubricates guitar strings • Gets oil spots off concrete driveways • Gives floors that 'just-waxed' sheen without making them slippery • Keeps flies off cows • Restores and cleans chalkboards • Removes lipstick stains • Loosens stubborn zippers • Untangles jewelry chains • Removes stains from stainless steel sinks • Removes dirt and grime from the barbecue grill • Keeps ceramic/terra cotta garden pots from oxidizing • Removes tomato stains from clothing • Keeps glass shower doors free of water spots • Camouflages scratches in ceramic and marble floors • Gives a children's play gym slide a shine for a super fast slide • Rids rocking chairs and swings of squeaky noises • Lubricates about anything • Makes an umbrella easier to open and close • Restores and cleans padded leather dashboards in vehicles • Restores and cleans roof racks on vehicles • Keeps rust from forming on saws, sawblades, and other tools • Removes splattered grease on stoves • Keeps bathroom mirrors from fogging • Lubricates prosthetic limbs • Keeps pigeons off the balcony • Removes all traces of duct tape • Some folks spray it on their arms, hands, or knees to relieve arthritis pain. • One fellow claims spraying it on fishing lures attracts fish. And a lady says took gum out of the dryer after she'd dried a load of clothes and left gum in one of the pockets.

WD-40 grew from a search for a rust preventative solvent and degreaser to protect missile parts in 1953 by three technicians at the San Diego Rocket Chemical Company. Its name comes from a project to find a "water displacement" compound that was successful on the 40th formulation -- hence WD-40.

## THE HAPS IN DISTRICT 9

The weather has been cold during February in the Owens Valley. We have a good snow pack this year. I attended the Whiskey Creek luncheon in February with **Bob Ripley**, **Bob Marsh**, and **Gordon Lammiman**.

The taxes are done and I have been busy working on the new house so I have not seen many of the old timers lately. Also no email updates from anyone (well I got an email from **Harold Jones**. Not exactly an update but stated that all the graphics with last joke I sent tied up his computer and phone line for a couple of days). Sorry, **Harold** -- high tech problems in a high tech era.

We bowl in the league with **Jim Kemp**, who reports that **Linda** had major cancer surgery the last week of February. **Linda** is back home and recuperating. **Jim** and **Linda** were going to babysit **Jim** and **Mikki Strong's** dog and cats in Montana while the **Strongs** were in for Africa for six weeks. The **Kemps** still want to do that.

**Barbara** and I went to an HVAC trade show at the Anaheim Convention Center in January. We had lunch at **Howard** and **Terri Lee's** home in Long Beach where some of the old District 07/12 folks showed up: **Milt Watanabi**, **Don Higuchi** and **Clarence Ohara**. **Howard's** fishing buddy, **Roy Tacashita**, a retired schoolteacher, also was there. I had a great time talking about the good old days and finding out what they were all doing. **Clarence**, the Deputy Director responsible for the District 12's engineering computers such as CAD and Office Engineers, finally got a home computer with email.

**Jack Edell** passed away January 6, 2004 in Bishop, where he lived for the past 52 years. He worked in District 9 in Surveys, Construction, Right of Way Engineering and Environmental Planning. He served in the Army in Europe during World War II and was a POW. His war stories were interesting. He was a good writer and his environmental reports were interesting to read. We will miss **Jack** and extend condolences to his family and friends.

**Ed Nahhas**, another dedicated Caltrans employee, passed away January 3, 2004 in Bishop. **Ed** worked in Maintenance in District 09 as a Senior Highway Superintendent. He enjoyed smoking cigars and one of his intriguing activities was investing in racing camels. **Ed**, a World War II veteran, served in the Seabees in the South Pacific. He will be missed and condolences to his family and friends.

**Jane Wells** passed away January 18, 2004 in Modesto. **Jane** was a secretary in District 09 in the late 1970s. **Jane** was in a theater group in Bishop. She also served in the Navy in World War II. Our condolences to her family and friends.

*Lance Hinek*

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### Why God Created Children

Whenever your children are out of control, you can take comfort from the thought that even God's omnipotence did not extend to His own children.

After creating heaven and earth, God created Adam and Eve. And the first thing he said was "Don't!"

"Don't what?" Adam replied.

"Don't eat the forbidden fruit." God said.

"Forbidden fruit? We have forbidden fruit? Hey Eve...we have forbidden fruit!!!!!"

"Do NOT eat the fruit!" said God.

"Why?"

"Because I am your Father and I said so!" God replied, wondering why He hadn't stopped after the elephants. A few minutes later, God saw His children having an apple break and He was ticked!

"Didn't I tell you not to eat the fruit?" God asked.

"Uh huh," Adam replied.

"Then why did you?" said the Father.

"I don't know," said Eve.

"She started it!" Adam said

Having had it with the two of them, God's punishment was that Adam and Eve should have children of their own. Thus the pattern was set and it has never changed.

## THE HAPS IN DISTRICT 10

**T**hirty-five QCCers were present at the between-the-holidays breakfast gathering at Denny's on December 30, 2003. Thirty-seven attended the get-together on January 27, 2004, including **Ron Lutz** of District 4, who had returned to Stockton for a family visit.

On the morning of Wednesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, **Stan Randolph, Sharon Stewart and Brian Young** made a visit to District 10 office in Stockton for the purpose of recruiting new members for the Quarter Century Club. **Stan** met with the District Engineer ahead of time and was included as a guest speaker at the district's monthly staff meeting that morning. Afterwards the three met with potential members in the cafeteria during lunch at an informational table with a placard with the QCC logo and application forms available. They plan to make this a semi-annual event. Two new members were recruited: **Leo Leotard and Chris Swayze**.

In addition, during the first part of the year, **John Sinclair and William Walter** became members.

Incidentally, we were impressed with the District 10 cafeteria motif and the great menu and also, that the public is welcome. Just down the hall some display cases showed off photos and memorabilia from days gone by. Check it out. You might find your own picture.

At the February 24th breakfast gathering at Denny's, 40 QCCers were present. Everyone was glad to see **Bill Vierra**, accompanied by his beautiful daughter **Christine**. Although Bill has not been in the best of health lately and is wheelchair bound, he didn't let that stop him from enjoying the breakfast. Sadly, Bill lost his beloved wife **Rose** on December 4, 2003.

**Clay Jackson** retired at the end of 2003, and although his retirement was from District 6, District 10 held his retirement party at the China Palace in Stockton on Wednesday February 25.

On Saturday, Feb 28 **Mike Ciccone** and wife **Bonnie** embarked on a cruise for seven days to

Mexico's Sea of Cortez on the Holland American cruise ship Ryndam. Leaving out of San Diego, they visited ports of call at La Paz, Loreto and Cabo San Lucas. **Mike** says they've been on many cruises to the Mexican Riviera but not at these ports of call.

**Note:** District 10 retirees -- whether members of the Quarter Century Club or not -- are welcome at the monthly breakfast on the last Tuesday of the month at Denny's at March Lane and I-5 in Stockton.

Of course all QCCers are welcome.

*Brian Young*

### Sacramento Jazz Jubilee Special Offer Memorial Day Weekend May 28-31, 2004

The Sacramento Jazz Jubilee's regular four-day \$95 admission is available to Quarter Century Club members for \$81, a 15% discount. And the one-day (Friday, Saturday, or Sunday) admission, normally selling for \$40, is available at \$34. Young Adult All Events is \$47.00. One-Day Badge, \$20.00.

The Sacramento Jazz Jubilee is the most prestigious event of its kind in the world.

Purchase badges directly by sending a check to the address below made out to: **Sacramento Jazz Jubilee**. Or charge your order on Visa, MC and American Express. Upon receipt of the order the festival will mail tickets that can be turned in for admission badges in Old Sacramento and other locations, such as the Cal Expo Main Gate.

For additional information, call (916) 428-5719 (home), the Jubilee office, (916) 372-5277, or email [jim4jazz@aol.com](mailto:jim4jazz@aol.com)

Jim Fusaro  
Group & Tour Sales Coordinator  
449 Cedar River Way  
Sacramento, CA 95831-2462

## THE HAPS IN DISTRICT 11

**J**ohn Lyons is off on a new chapter of his life and adventures yet to be told. He was born in '48 in the suburbs of Boston, the third of five boys. His dad worked in the Navy shipyards as a civil service employee and raised his family to be self-reliant. **John** went to Catholic schools and 'inherited' a paper route from his older brother when he was just eight. He was required to contribute a share of his earnings to the family kitty, but his other earnings went for tickets to see the Celtics, Bruins and Red Sox. That was a time and place when a kid could go to a night game and feel safe taking a late night subway ride home alone.

In '61 the family moved to Point Loma in California for his mother's health. **John** attended University High School for one year where his eastern accent made adaptation a challenge; he went to Point Loma High until his graduation in '66. He worked for a time as a retail clerk while attending Mesa College and taking classes in accounting and business until the chance came in '69 for a real job at the Division of Highways.

He started in field surveys for a year, and then went to construction testing to work on materials plants for a time and on to the 805/Miramar job, the 5/805 border job with **Jack Cramer** and the 805/43<sup>rd</sup> Street job with **Dick Mattox**.

Layoffs caught him in '75 and he went to EDD as an overpayment specialist for the next three years of horror stories. He says the best day there was much worse than the worst at Caltrans.

In '78 he was reinstated back to materials for two years, doing training under **Tom Hardison**, followed by another year in field surveys and three years in landscape construction before moving to permits in '84. He started under **Sam Kemp** but says he was really mentored by **Jim Wiggins**. He remained there for the last 20 years under supervisors **Howard Jackson**, **Chris Cuttler** and finally **John Markey** in the assignment that was the most enjoyable and satisfying of his nearly 35-year career.

**John** has never had to go on an out of town assignment and takes pride in his service even as times, co-workers and administration have changed.

Just after he started at Caltrans, he met his future wife, **Mary**, at a party hosted by his older brother **Joe**. He says he knew she was the one for him the moment he met her. He proposed in just two weeks and they were married just two months after they met back in '70.

They bought their first house in '71 six months after they were married and he has been remodeling 'fixers' ever since, right through his third and last current residence that he bought in '80 with a great view on the peninsula. He did extensive renovation there, (still is), as well as doing a good deal of remodeling and additions on rental properties over the years. He enjoys doing his own plumbing wiring windows, tile work and custom kitchen cabinetry.

Son **Shawn** was born in '74 and **Kevin** in '78 so **John** was coach for youth soccer for a number of years, sometimes coaching two teams and also serving as treasurer for Pony League baseball.

His wife **Mary** also just retired from her career as a microbiologist at UCSD and now volunteers at a senior care center when she isn't quilting 'big-time.' **Shawn** is married to **Erica** and they live with one-year old grandson **Connor** in the San Francisco Bay Area where he works for Franklin Templeton. **Kevin** is a teacher for the San Diego school district.

**John** and **Mary** have been to many spots in Mexico over the years but for the last four years in a row have connected with a friend and tour guide who organizes trips to Europe with small groups. They have been to France, Italy, Ireland and Spain and will go in November to Eastern Europe.

In addition to traveling, **John** may shift his woodworking to handcrafted doll houses. And for a broader perspective he hopes to become more involved in the peninsula community he calls home and loves dearly.

After 40 years of public service in three different districts and a dozen assignments, **Butch Biendara** exits from Caltrans to start a new chapter in his life story.



**Butch** was born on a farm in '44 as the 11th of 14 children in a family where 'schoolin' wasn't as important as milking cows and chopping wood for the cold winters in the "Lake Wobegone" area of Minnesota. Though other farms had tractors, they had horse drawn plows and wagons to work a small, not too-productive farm. Neither the farm nor the one-room school for 15 kids --four from his family -- in eight grades had plumbing or electricity.

Family roles and responsibilities were well established and at each age he learned to step up a level of chores, whether it was gathering eggs, pumping water, chopping wood or cleaning out the barn. He felt all grown up when he got to work with the men at thrashing time, pitching grain shocks into the thrashing machine.

When **Butch** was 10, the county welfare office decided that the family wasn't making progress and moved his mother and the eight younger children to a house in town with plumbing, electricity, phone and a coal fired furnace. The coal company delivered right down into the bin just a step away from the furnace. Wow, what a life of comfort, ease and luxury.

Work remained a part of **Butch's** life. In town he mowed lawns in the summer or shoveled snow in the winter for pocket money. He had a paper route and lied about his age to get a job at a meat packing plant one summer. A school friend whose dad had a construction company asked if he wanted a job doing cleanup at a shopping center, which led to working at a dime store as stock boy in the summers and part time through graduation in '62.

Though he was offered a fully funded way to go to the University of Minnesota it meant being the caregiver for a disabled professor and since he was already making a dollar an hour, he declined. Shortly after graduation his drafting teacher called with an offer from a local granite shed to draw artwork for tombstones. It was easy work with his own drafting table right there with the rest of the men and no lifting or dealing with the public at \$1.25 an hour. After painting and doing repairs on his mother's home, he moved out to a five-dollar-a-week sleeping room across town. Ah, life was good.

After a year he found that the head draftsman was only making two dollars an hour, so the tombstone business looked like a 'dead-end' job. When his brother **Ken** called to see if he wanted to come to California (**Ken** had started working for the Division of Highways in San Diego but had bought 40 acres close to Redding and was preparing a homesite) **Butch** took a state job at the huge salary of \$345 per month. He lived with his brother for a year, clearing land, digging a well and putting up fence.

It was lonely in the hills and his high school sweetheart was far away so after a year at the great paying job he went back to Minnesota and married **Faye** in Aug. of '64. They settled down in a cozy little 8' x 35' trailer in a park across the river from the District II office, but just six months later he was sent out to do surveying for storm damage of the '64 floods. That meant traveling for weeks to distant locations, sometimes staying for two weeks in a row. When the storm damage work ended he continued with the preliminary survey crew working in advance of design projects, often on mountaintops at night, tramping through the forest looking for property corners or hacking brush lines to lay down a new centerline on highway alignments. What a great adventure -- and to get paid for it as well was grand.

**Butch** was working in construction in '68 on one of the last new Interstate projects in District II when a promotional opportunity came for a move to District I, where the hope was that Highway 101 would soon be upgraded to Interstate status. But that meant he was back at preliminary field surveys up and down the north coast where they had to use waterproof paper and were often working in a pouring rain. In '70 when his second child was born he requested an office job so he could be at home more. He spent the next few years in the surveys office checking field notes and doing calculations.

**Butch** survived the lay off of '75 but was demoted back to Tech level until he was reinstated and most of the work appeared to be Districts 4, 7 and 11. San Diego seemed like the best 'small-town' fit for a country boy and he moved to design in District 11 in Aug of '77. Assignments in design X

2, traffic, materials, construction, R/W utilities and finally, local assistance followed. He passed every one of the 10 exams that came up, never failed one of them, but was only been promoted on four of them. Some were for jobs at other agencies and for others he wasn't as PC qualified as administration wanted.

Some accomplishments he remembers are: setting up the first computer-drawn project in District 11, (the I-15/274 interchange) and moving the Sand Hills interchange a half mile, saving nearly a million on a project, (and getting in trouble for it) The real corker was waking up from a dream with an idea for eliminating a difficult and expensive detour. In the dream he floated above the project, seeing both the existing and the completed project in a transparent three-dimensional view. The answer lay a half-mile away in an area no one had studied but when he drew it up it was just what was needed.

One item not yet realized was a merit suggestion to develop a cooperative GIS based mapping system to share information with other agencies. In the R/W utility assignment it was a problem to share mapping information with other entities. A GIS system would overcome that and allow each entity to create its own mapping data and to share that data with any other agency that needed it. Unfortunately the bureaucracy and others with empires to protect wouldn't give it a chance, but in time technology will make anything else seem absurd compared to it.

In his private life, **Butch** still leads a life reminiscent of his farm boy roots with do-it-yourself work from auto repair to beer brewing to organic gardening. He and his wife will celebrate their 40<sup>th</sup> this summer and their two children and two grand children are a great source of pride and joy. Daughter **Melany** has a place in Ocean Beach and often has a 'home-improvement' project that he can help with. Son **Jake** and his wife **Angie** live in Apple Valley with the two greatest grand kids in the world, **Natalie** age 4 and **Justin** just 2.

Some projects that still lay before him are an improved bicycle design, a new sailboat concept, man-powered flight for the masses, and an improved wind generator. A few books need to be written.

Some of the ideas may eventually turn a profit but that's not the main goal for him. It's the belief that when there is an improvement to be made, you just do it to the best of your ability.

**Bob Young** called with unfortunate news of the passing of **John Weigand** on 02-23-04.

And this is a tentative announcement of the summer picnic at Santee lakes on the third Saturday in September -- the 18th. Tentative, because **Dean** can't make the reservation until April and hopes that the date is not taken by others. Mark your calendars and we'll let you know how it holds or changes.

*-- Butch Biendera*

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### New and Exceptional Idiots of the Year

**Will the Real Dummy Please Stand Up?** AT&T fired President John Walter after nine months, saying he lacked intellectual leadership. He received a \$26 million severance package.

**With a Little Help From Our Friends:** Police in Oakland spent two hours attempting to subdue a gunman who had barricaded himself inside his home. After firing ten tear gas canisters, officers discovered that the man was standing beside them in the police line, shouting, "Come out and give yourself up."

**A Summer Outing:** Last summer on Lake Isabella, some folks, new to boating, were having problems. Their boat was very sluggish in almost every maneuver, no matter how much power they applied. After about an hour of trying to make it go, they put into a nearby marina, thinking someone there could tell them what was wrong. A thorough topside check revealed everything in perfect working condition. The engine ran fine, the outdrive went up and down, the prop was the correct size and pitch. So, one of the marina guys jumped into the water to check underneath. He came up choking on water because he was laughing so hard. **Now remember, this is True...** Under the boat, still strapped securely in place, was the trailer.

## THE HAPS IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT

**T**he Central District's holiday dinner party was held December 10 at the Sacramento Holiday Inn. It was a great opportunity for more than 110 members and friends to share the spirit of the season and enjoy holiday music provided by **Bob Rothstein's** "Cool Delta Breeze" band.

Bottles of wine went to **Gene Berthelsen** as the newest retiree and to everyone at **Norm Root's** table for having more correct answers about the history of Caltrans than those at other tables -- And many lucky people left the party with very special raffle gifts selected by **Ann and Dick Petrie**. **Dick** presided over a short business meeting when it was agreed that 2003 officers would serve for another year through 2004. **Dick** also presented **Doris Fowler** with an Honorary Member's award for her 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday. **Congratulations Doris!!**

We're now looking forward to 2004 activities. Our spring luncheon is set for **Wednesday, May 5**, at the Dante Club. Look for an announcement in early April.

Following is news from members as reported at the December holiday party:

**Peggy and Charlie Sweet** -- had some Rotary friends from England come to visit. We met them in San Francisco and spent two nights there. Took the train back to Sacramento and entertained them here for four days. After that we flew to Virginia (right after the hurricane there) and spent four nights. Then off to Washington DC for two nights. Let me tell you -- you can't see Washington in two days -- but we tried. Wonderful trip, great friends and lots of sightseeing. Home "resting" now.

**Gene Berthelsen** -- will be off to New York City to visit with his first grandchild, baby Zoe, in April. In the process he has tickets to "The Producers" and hopes to see some first rate jazz and maybe a museum or two. He'll also take a side trip to Washington DC where he wants to pick up some local color for the setting for the novel he's working on about a government office that does nothing at all. His jazz band, the Catsnjammer Jazz Band, is getting

into full swing with appearances around Sacramento and Redding and, later on this year, in Medford. Otherwise, he's busy skiing, helping with publicity for the Transportation Foundation, editing the QCCer and doing PR for the Sacramento Jazz Jubilee.

**Jack and Ellen Derby** -- did a lot of golfing, hiking and fishing this summer and fall. We spent several days camping with our ski club group at Loon Lake. There was a good salmon run and we took 28 nice fish in Jack's boat. Several fish in the 25-30 pound range. **Ellen** and her friend, **Florence**, spent several days along the Central Coast.

**Jim and Earlene Borden** -- went back to Arizona in October, this time for **Jim's** 50<sup>th</sup> high school reunion. Amazing how much all our friends had aged!! Spent time with **Earlene's** sister and husband and with **Jim's** brother and wife. **Jim's** brother lives right on the golf course at Sun City and they played every day. Tough life!! Good to see so many wonderful friends here at the QCC dinner. Happy holidays to all.

**Jane and Chuck Pivetti** -- **Jane** actually gave up bridge for two weeks so we could go to Southern France in November. **Chuck** did a bicycle tour around the Olympic Peninsula in September. Then two weeks later we were back for a photo junket with members of **Chuck's** camera club. Now we're raising a 12-week old Lab puppy that keeps us very busy.

**Irene Francies** -- Enjoying the Christmas get-together. Had a wonderful Thanksgiving with my daughter and family and my son and his wife from San Diego. Went on a couple of short trips with my sister and my daughter. Glad I can still get around for trips once in awhile.

**Sarah and Earl Lehman** -- Nice to visit with friends again. We spent seven weeks traveling and visiting in the Mid-West and then a week on a 15-day cruise to and around Hawaii. It was enjoyable but it's always nice to get back home. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all!

**Chris and Bob Page** -- It's good to visit with former workers and share what we've been doing. I

just noticed that Chris and I have put 20,000+ miles on our RV since September 2002. It's not difficult with family in Virginia and California. We spent some time (not enough) in Nova Scotia this year.

**Julie and Gary Bush** -- We have been retired two years, three months and have not looked back. A trip a month has been our goal and we've been pretty close to achieving our goal. We celebrated our 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on a cruise/land tour to Alaska. Being native Californians, we are trying to see all of California in addition to the rest of the United States. It was great seeing many other retirees at the Christmas party.

**Marge and Joe Dobrowolski** -- are enjoying Fair Oaks and the environs -- the Chamber, Historical Society, Save-the-Bluffs group and Thursday Club. We continue to work on our house and think about hiking and travel.

**Pat Mooney** -- Still enjoying retirement. I recommend it. Have traveled for two years of which one year was spent at Lake Chapala near Guadalajara, Mexico.

**Harry Valentine** -- Now a docent at the Sacramento Railroad Museum.

**Marilyn and Darwin Spartz** -- Enjoyed a wonderful cruise around Australia and New Zealand in February. Beautiful scenery and friendly people. Included a land tour to Queenstown. Also spent a week in Kona, Hawaii. Darwin now has a new titanium hip and is walking much better.

**Chuck Paulsen and Marge Weston** -- (now engaged, finally) did get in a rail trip across Canada from Victoria, BC to Ottawa, Canada. The western most portion up to and across the Rockies was really magnificent. Since then things have slowed down considerably. **Margaret** has endured two spinal fusion surgeries in the last three months. She is recovering nicely but must still use a walker. **Chuck** has become adept at nurses aid duties as well as cooking as **Margie** had lived in a two-story condo in our traveling days. We are looking forward to traveling once more as well as dancing (three clubs) and bicycle riding

**Gerri and Ken Wigglesworth** -- spent a week in Oregon in June with the American Birding Association. Saw 138 species (7 "lifers"). Next April will be heading to McAllen Texas for more bird watching and then off to Australia in September. **Gerri** has gotten busy with the SPCA as a "certified cat adoption counselor" and helping with various fund raising activities. Both of us are involved with the Carmichael Cactus and Succulent Society.

**Betty and Mac McKenney** -- Print our names in **BOLD** so our friends in QCC will know we are here.

**(Done)**

**Adele and Merle Larrabee** -- In October took their 14-year old grandson on a six-day cruise from San Diego to LaPaz and Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. A great time was had by all. Staying home for the holidays. Merry Christmas to all.

**Emily-Ann and Jim Standley** -- are very happy to see all of their old Caltrans friends.

**Doris Fowler** -- says this is her first Christmas party, but not the last. If tonight's award comes through, she will claim to be 80!

**Ileen Jellison** -- is retiring on December 30<sup>th</sup> to start the new year off right!

**Judy and David Saxby** -- will enjoy Christmas with their four children, two sons-in-law, one daughter-in-law and new grandchildren, aged nine months and 18 months. Enjoyed seeing everyone at the QCC party and hope you all have a wonderful Christmas.

**Sharon and Glen Rosander** -- held a "moving sale" for Glen's 90-year-old mother who is going to live with Glen's sister in Fresno. 67 years of living in a 100-year old home makes for lots of memories -- and a great accumulation of STUFF!

**Addi and Ray Forsyth** -- Merry Christmas to all. What a great party. Great to see so many friends. Our highlight was a Forsyth family get-together at Lake Tahoe. **Ray** rented a five-bedroom home on Lake Tahoe. We did hiking, white water rafting, good eating and adult beverages. May your holidays be wonderful.

**Connie and Joe Thomas** -- Happy Holidays from the Carmichael Thomases, (formerly Eureka

**Thomas(es)**. Joe and crew are all A-OK and are very happy to be out and about and busy. We spent a good part of the summer in Eureka and visited our elder daughter in South Bend, Indiana over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July for a family reunion. We'll be in Eureka (really Kneeland) for Christmas with our younger daughter and family. Best wishes to all for a happy and healthy 2004.

**Luann and Ron Hollis** – Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all. The Hollises have had another good year. We have been continuing our travels in the US and Europe. This year's Europe trip was with the **Feltons** on a river cruise from Amsterdam to Vienna with an extended stay to explore the music history in Vienna.

**Lola and Bill Altus** – It's been great meeting once again with friends and people we shared our work experiences with. We do it all too seldom. I particularly enjoyed sharing "slides I have known" with **Ray Forsyth**. We wish you all a happy holiday season and a prosperous New Year.

**Dorothy and Don Alden** – It is good to see so many friends at Christmas time. This year has been another busy one for us. **Dorothy's** responsibilities as Executive Secretary for the Sacramento Community Concerts Association have been greatly expanded. She enjoys working in the performing arts world even though there are a few stinkers. Her work included an enjoyable trip to the Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee for a week of auditioning classical musical groups and getting acquainted with musicians and managers. For **Don** it has been an unusually good year for his hobby, competitive rowing. He picked up a few medals rowing on the water, but the big thrill this year was being selected to be on the US National Indoor Rowing Team (on simulator machines). This team consisted of 20 men and a woman who had the best qualifying in each age bracket from 18 to 80 years old. Many were current or ex-Olympians. Our coach was Mike Tedi, the US Olympic coach. We were sponsored (travel expenses) by a sporting goods company and all did very well in the European Championships in Birmingham, England and at the World's

Championships in Boston. **Don** took the Gold for the heavyweight event for men over 80 in both.

**George Smith** – Not so much traveling this year but did make a trip with my two daughters to Roxbury, New York where my forbears came from Scotland in the 1830's. Really fun to see the original house and check on history of the Smith's. Also real fun to see the many old friends here tonight.

**Margaret and Ron Lemmon** – We've been doing a lot of traveling, mostly with SIRS groups. The highlight was a cruise with SIRS to celebrate its 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We traveled via ship from San Francisco to the Alaskan coastal cities, then back to San Francisco via Vancouver where we had a huge dinner followed by ballroom dancing to WWII music.

**Dorothy and Vince Paul** – We recently gave up our RV, after some 14 years of seeing much of the US. We've gotten the bug for cruising. We took a Mexican Riviera cruise in November and are signed up for a cruise to the Hawaiian Islands in January, a Mississippi River cruise in March and an Alaskan cruise in September.

**Louise and Dick and Ginsberg** – Went on the SIRS cruise to Alaska in October and also spent a week in New Orleans shortly after the cruise. We are planning a riverboat cruise on the "Great Rivers of Europe" in early April 2004. We will cruise the Rhine and Danube, spending most of our time in Germany.

**Donna and Fred Campbell** – Glad we were able to make the dinner. Good to see our still young friends. We have moved from Red Bluff to Chico and are enjoying it.

**Kay and Hugh Griffin** – This past year has been eventful for us. Kay's mother passed away about this time last year. Our youngest son and his wife became proud parents of identical twin girls on July 12 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina and we were there. We drove through the southern United States and really enjoyed San Antonio and New Orleans. Coming back to California in August we visited the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis and the Atomic Energy Museum in Albuquerque. Our oldest son bought a home in Santa Cruz so we have an extra incentive to visit the coast.

**Wilma and Don Watson** – Will cruise the Mexican Riviera in January with 23 family members and friends. In July we will return to Hawaii for our fifth visit. In August they will travel to Pennsylvania to visit family members. We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**Vern Leseman** – and his secret friend -- will be going on a cruise from Florida to San Diego via the Panama Canal in April. Then we plan on a tour of California – SLO, Hearst Castle, Carmel, Monterey and finally Sacramento.

**Dave Crane** – Merry Christmas! Other than that I don't have much to report. No trips except to go deer hunting up back of Mt. Shasta in October. No deer (legal ones, that is)!!

**Chuck Chenu** – Still finding time to work and travel. Central Europe in October and Malta next February.

**Norm Root** – Was featured as the Senior Spotlight in the October issue of "Senior Magazine" for his work as California State Director of the Lincoln Highway Association. There were four articles in that issue telling about the Lincoln Highway, 1913-1927, and featuring several historic photos from the Caltrans History Archives.

**Debra and Marlin Beckwith** – Unfortunately I'm still working! However, with Marlin retired for three years now and my having a lot of three day weekends, we enjoy camping in our new super-size tent trailer. We also enjoy going to Oregon for two weeks each September with retired Caltrans friends.

**Martin Kiff** says that he, Dick Petrie and, of course, Marlin Beckwith -- "The Three Fishateers" -- have been giving the fish at Amador a hard time. They spend hours with their lines in the water and their little poles erect – all for the love of that scaly little creature they sometimes catch. Oh well, what's retirement for? They are having a great time. However, the poor little fishies they sometimes catch are not so fortunate. Happy New Year!

**Jeanne and Dave Theobald** – Enjoyed the Alaskan cruise on the Vollandam with SIRS in September. Wishing all a wonderful holiday season and healthy 2004.

**Ann and Dick Petrie** – Drove to Big Sky, Montana, in August – FAST! The Corvette did pretty well on those back roads @ ?? MPH. Spent two weeks in Mazatlan where **Dick** caught three sailfish and **Ann** caught a great tan!!!

**Nancy and Don Benjamin** – For most of our time since October, we've been staying close to home and enjoying family and friends. In early December we had a great visit with **Pat Mickelson** in the Santa Barbara area and enjoyed some scenic coastal hikes. Our restless feet are departing on January 17 for three weeks in Costa Rica.

-- Nancy Benjamin

**EVENTS**

**District 3 - *No Contact***  
**Breakfast at Perko's**, 3rd Wednesday of the month  
Yuba City  
7:00 a.m.

**District 4 *Contact: Ed Cobble, (650) 941-5156***  
Email: [edcoble49@worldnet.att.net](mailto:edcoble49@worldnet.att.net)  
**Caltrans Lunch Bunch** 2nd Tuesday of the month

**District 6 *Contact: Ralph Tritch, (559) 535-4295***  
**Caltrans Retiree Breakfast** 3rd Wednesday in  
March and September  
Green Valley Restaurant  
Olive & J Street Porterville  
9:00 am

**District 7 *Contact: Tom Fera, (818) 896-9377***  
**Monthly Luncheon Club** 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed. of the month  
Los Angeles

**District 9 *Contact: Lance Hinek, (619) 873-3885***  
**Lunch at Whiskey Creek** 1st Friday of the month  
Bishop

**District 10 *No Contact***  
**Lenny's Huddle** Last Tuesday of the month  
Denny's, I-5 and March Lane, Stockton

**District 11 *No Contact***  
**ROMEOs (Retired Old Men Eating Out)**  
3rd Wednesday of every month  
Denny's, Navajo Road  
8:30 am.

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