

TheQCCer

The Newsletter of the Quarter
Century Club

VOLUME 21, No. 4

DECEMBER 2012



Reflections on the year...

BUTCH SAYS; 'LIFE IS A GIFT !'

From the Corner Pocket

Merry Christmas and/or Happy Holidays to you, your family and friends wherever you may be. Here's hoping that you didn't suffer in any of the fires, floods or other misfortunes that have hit so many people this past year. We can all look to the New Year as a fresh start for a better tomorrow.

We note that in some Districts, the QCC officers have changed and trust that it's a move to bring fresh new energy into your District functions. If you haven't yet stepped up to share in the leadership of your local events, maybe next year is the time to do so. If I may paraphrase a former leader, "*Ask not what your District QCC can do for you; ask what you can do for your District QCC.*"

QCC District activity varies widely and to the best of my knowledge there are no written rules on what District functions are to be. If your District has some guidelines, I'd be curious to know what they are and how well they work. If there are none, you are free to try most anything that might interest you and that others will support by their participation. Contact your QCC District Director to see how you can contribute your assistance.



At this end-of-year you might check to see if your District Director has made use of your District's reimbursable Recruiting allowance. If there is unused recruitment allowance, you can still see what you can do in this last month. We work on an annual calendar year budget and if you haven't spent the 2012 funds by December 31, they return back into the State QCC treasury.

Thanks to all contributors of their adventures and memories. Two winners from the last QCC'er are our State Secretary / Treasurer, **Mike Ogilvie** for his tale of this bike ride and **Jack Blackburn** for his geo-cashing achievements. It's good to hear of retirees staying active and looking for challenges in life. I am continuing to look for more stories and ask you to consider contributing stories from your experiences and/or your fun times.

A short note on the past election has this bit of comfort in that in spite of the Billion\$ of dollar\$ spent, (about \$40 per vote), we saw that in most cases money can't buy the election. The buying comes when those who were elected, sell their votes to special interests in moving legislation along.

In San Diego it's a bit hard to imagine winter coming, but time goes by as we head toward the close of another year. This time of year leads us to

reflect on those people and things that are most important in our lives. We remember those loved ones and friends that are no longer with us. We look forward to spending time with family and friends as we reflect on the real reason for the season.

Life is a gift to you. So live for today and say all the things you want your loved ones to remember. The way you live your life is your gift to those who come after you. Make it a fantastic one.

~ And, Remember ~ "It is health that is real wealth, and not pieces of gold or silver."

Butch Biendara
QCC President

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Rather read the QCCer on-line?

Go to

<http://ctqcc.150m.com/qccnewsletter.html>

A membership application and a wealth of information about QCC officers, history, and constitution are available at

<http://ctqcc.150m.com/qcc.html>

Check the current haps at Caltrans at

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/ctnews>

CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION FOUNDATION

By **Kathy Freeman**

Special thanks this year go to the following from Caltrans for their continuing participation and mentoring at the annual Transportation Education Symposium held in November: **Christine Cox (District 6)**, **Christine Inouye (Headquarters)** and **Ryan Chamberlain (District 12)**. This year there were 38 students from California's colleges and universities selected and paired with high-level practicing professionals including those listed above, in interactive sessions exploring today's real world of transportation engineering and planning.

Also in November, the Foundation was honored to co-host a reception with WTS and ACEC to welcome **Ryan Chamberlain** as the new District 12 Director. CTF Chair **Will Kempton** acted as Master of Ceremonies at the 150 person event held in Irvine.

As the new year approaches, all of us here at the Foundation would like to thank you for your interest, support and gift of time. Remember we are always looking for volunteers to staff and support the many activities throughout the year held either in Sacramento or in the Districts. Volunteers assist with registrations at various activities (**such as the additional golf tournament to be held for the first time in Irvine on April 29th**), stuff envelopes

for annual solicitations, serve on a more regular basis on special tasks, share information about CTF, prepare CTF correspondence, provide financial record assistance or participate in Caltrans sponsored activities as a CTF representative. If you are interested in joining us in any of these various ways, contact Executive Director Sarah West at www.transportationfoundation.org or (916)489-1629 to add your name to the list of volunteers already participating.

Have a safe, healthy, and happy New Year!

In Memoriam

We extend our sympathy to family members and loved ones of our fallen colleagues

Name	District	Date
Ellen Cowden	01	July 27, 2012
Robert W. Downing	01	Nov 1, 2012
James R Lyon	01	Nov 16, 2012
Perry R Lowden, Jr	03	Oct , 2012
James S. Bland	05	Sep 27, 2012
Manuel Luiz	05	Nov 9, 2012
Richard (Dick) Murphy	07	Mar , 2011
Marvin Lim	07	Sep , 2012
Ralph Goins	07	Oct 17, 2012
Irv Borow	07	Nov 15, 2012
Ed Gritters	08	Nov 3, 2012
Tom Jeannotte	08	Nov 1, 2012
Fred Strait	08	2012
Al Lawrence	08	Oct , 2012
Sabrina Vasquez	11	July 22, 2012
Jay Gitten	11	July 25, 2012
Jean Fields	11	July 31, 2012
Larry Williams	11	Sep , 2012
Doug Arrick	11	Oct , 2012
Joyce Wrenn	C	Sep 26, 2012

My Path to the Panama Canal

By Allen Wrenn

My path to the Panama Canal was a long and somewhat circuitous one. It culminated with me transiting the Canal 69 times. That is not a misprint. I did transit the Canal that many times.

It all began because, in my youth, I was a percussionist. The word percussionist sounds better than just saying I was a drummer boy. As a percussionist I got hooked up with what was a great tradition of San Diego, even though I did not realize it at the time. That tradition was a marching and concert band.

The Bonham Brothers Mortuary sponsored a marching band for the City of San Diego. This band, formed in the 1920's, would represent the City in the annual New Year's Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena. My involvement with this band began in 1946. My parents told me I should take music lessons and I chose the drums. Thanks to a renowned percussion instructor named Myron Collins, I was able to become a member of the band.

So, how does this story of my playing in the band tie in with the Panama Canal?

During my four years of playing in the band we would perform concerts at the Spreckels Organ Pavilion in Balboa Park on Easter Sundays. Also, several times a year we would use the parking lot behind the Pavilion for our marching practices on Saturday mornings. So, we were in Balboa Park a lot. There I was, a kid of 11 or 12 years old, looking around at all those old buildings and wondering why they were there. That was when I learned many of them had been built for the 1915-16 Panama-California Exposition. This was an Exposition held to commemorate the opening of the Panama Canal.

San Diego had been a natural to host an Exposition related to the Panama Canal since it was the first US city that ships could call at after transiting the Canal coming from the Atlantic Ocean. Before learning this I had probably heard of the Panama Canal, but realizing I was amidst a lot of history related to it struck me as something special. And that was the beginning of my long-time interest in the Canal.

Although I did not do any research on the subject, I remained interested in it. Then, in the 1980s Joyce

(my late wife) and I started cruising. We cruised to Alaska, and cruised the various routes in the Caribbean. I kept saying we should cruise the Panama Canal. So, eventually we did. It was in 1997 that we cruised from Ft Lauderdale to Vancouver, BC. We did the Canal again in 1998, going from Acapulco to Ft Lauderdale.

Something significant happened on both of those cruises that set a chain of events in motion. Neither of those cruises had anyone giving lectures about the Canal prior to our transit. They both did have an on-board narrator giving commentary as we passed through the Canal. Even though that narrator gave a lot of good information, they were limited in what they could share with the passengers. As we made our transits I was all around the ship taking in the sights and taking a lot of pictures. As I did this I heard many passengers talking among themselves wondering why something was being done, or wondering what some piece of equipment was used for, or wondering how the locks worked. When I heard this, I would volunteer answers to them. That would always lead to more questions. And that would always result in a group of passengers gathering around to hear what I had to say.

Each time we went on those cruises I thought, "Something is missing in the information department aboard ship."

After that I approached Holland America Line with the idea that they should have on-board lecturers talking about the Panama Canal. Ironically, they had recently come to the same conclusion. They asked me to send them some examples of my pictures and an outline of what I could give in the way of lectures. After that they hired me as a Guest Lecturer. I continued in that capacity for almost 12 years. Each year the number of cruises we would do varied, with the most being in 2001 when we did nine transits.

Early in my time as a Guest Lecturer passengers began asking if I had a book or a video by which I could share my information with them. I saw this as

another opportunity for me to fill a need. This led to me producing a 3 hour and 45 minute video that I now sell through Cruise Travel magazine or directly to friends.

Unfortunately, Holland America Line recently decided they would no longer use Guest Lecturers on Panama Canal cruises. However, it was fun being on a cruise ship 50 to 100 or more days each year. We made a lot of friends amongst the staff on the ships, we got to see a lot of foreign ports and we got to see the Panama Canal a lot.

The Canal has been designated by the American Society of Civil Engineers as an International Historic Civil Engineering Landmark, One of The Seven Wonders of The Modern World, and One of The Ten Monuments of The Millennium. Honors have also been bestowed by other professional organizations as well.

During my time of serving as a Guest Lecturer I estimate I gave presentations to more than 45,000 cruise ship passengers. I could never have imagined it would lead to that when I was marching around that parking lot in Balboa Park.

So there is my story of how “a little drummer boy” went on to become somewhat of an expert on one of the greatest Civil Engineering achievements of all time.

The Haps in District 1

It is hard to believe where the year went. I am catching up with recent retirements. **Andrew Holberg**, CT Equipment Operator II, retired 6/18/12; **William Bauer**, CT Equipment Operator II, and **Jeffrey Troxell**, CT Highway Maintenance Leadworker, retired 6/30/12; **David Eckert**, CT Equipment Operator II, retired 7/1/12; **Ernest Merritt**, Transportation Surveyor Party Chief, retired 7/4/12; **David Chang**, TE, and **Deborah Harmon**, Sr Environmental Planner, retired 7/7/12; **Gary Berrigan**, Sr Environmental Planner, retired

7/31/12; and **Nancy Hueske**, Assoc R/W Agent, retired 8/1/12. We wish them all a long, healthy, and happy retirement.

On August 14, 2012, I was able to attend a great pot luck lunch at the CT Annex to honor **Nancy Hueske's** retirement. Some of the attendees included **Clay Nystrom**, **Bruce Marshall**, **Georgia Hanel**, **Deborah Harmon** and **Dennis Dickensheets**. **Lisa Spellenberg** put together a wonderful memory book.

Douglas Moorehead, a retired TET, is staying active by giving organ concerts. Back in 1982, he began his tenure as organist and choir director at Christ Church, Eureka. In September, he gave a recital at the church, with a reception following.

Twenty two District 1 retirees enjoyed our quarterly lunch at the Samoa Cookhouse on 10/18/12.

In September, **George Otterbeck** took a quick trip to Bremerton, WA to see his son and then went to Helena, Montana. He dealt with a lot of smoke from the fires all across the area. In Helena, he attended his oldest grandson's Eagle Scout ceremony. After that, he and his daughter, Dria, with 5 of her children, came down to Eureka to spend time with family.

On October 12, **Tom and Murlene Georgeson** toured New England, enjoying the fall foliage and time in Boston.

Rita Coleman shared that she and her husband went back to Cheyenne, Wyoming, for an early Thanksgiving with their daughter and her family. They were able to see their latest great granddaughter, Leva, born in September, and her big sister, Elliana, who turned two in September.

On a sad note:

I received a report from **Mary Kay** that **Ellen Cowden** passed away on July 27, 2012. She had worked in District 1 before she transferred to another District.

Robert W. Downing, retired from District 1 Maintenance at Willow Creek, passed away on 11/1/2012 at age 88. He retired in 1986 after 24 years of service.

James R. Lyon, TE, passed away suddenly on 11/16/2012 at age 77. He retired in 1991 and had been the D-1 representative for the QCC.

Our deepest sympathy goes out to the families of **Ellen, Robert, and Jim.**

Please remember to send in your **Annual Dues** (see page 19). I wish you all a very Merry Christmas!

- **Arlene Hartin**

The Haps in District 2

The District 2 Quarter Century Club will be holding its winter luncheon at Lulu's Eating Establishment in Redding at 11:30am on January 17th. Contact Bill Belcher at shastaqcc@yahoo.com for further info.

Jim & Sandy Ceragioli say that by the time you read this, they will have been married for approximately 2 months. They were married on October 20th in Reno. He says it was "not" a shotgun wedding. Reno is where his youngest grandchildren live. November 13th saw them heading out to Sydney Australia for 5 days, then on a cruise to 3 Australian and 5 New Zealand ports of call. 21 days total on the trip with 14 days down under. This turned out to be their honeymoon.

Jan & Burt Brockett drove to Yellowstone Park in June to meet with their daughter Gayle and her family who had driven out from Virginia. They had a great time for 4 days. The trip home took them through the Grand Tetons. In August they went rafting for 7 miles on the Trinity River with their other daughter and family from Roseville. Burt and their son-in-law both got dumped in the river at Hell Hole.

John & June Strode had their 2 Chinese daughters from Beijing and their kids over from July 6th -28th. The girls supplied all the food planning and cooking, did all the dishes and laundry, and even bought 2 tanks of gas for them. Their six year old kids spent 2 weeks at Camp Calwell, and, they took them to Shasta Lake Caverns and Trinity Lake. June fixed them baked turkey with brown rice stuffing which they loved. It seems there are very few gas stoves in China anywhere. The gas stoves oven space is used for pots and pans storage. He says "oh well, anyone want to sell stoves with ovens in China?" Remember there are 1.6 billion Chinese.

Retha & Nick Rubiec flew to Des Moines, Iowa in June for a family wedding and a visit with relatives, and had a great time visiting with all of them and meeting cousins for the first time. Retha was just 16 year old the last time she was there 46 years ago. They also flew to Las Vegas in late August and met up with Nancy & Wayne Flower (formerly Nancy Harvey) and their family. The whole group saw Neil Diamond's last performance on the year's tour (see photo below).



June McLean went to another family reunion in Virginia with 91 family members. She turned into a caregiver while there as her sister fell down a flight of stairs and was down for the whole duration. Her sister's husband has terminal cancer and Alzheimer. She attended the county fair (the largest farm fair in the U.S.) with her sister in law who entered a Cocks

Comb flower. She could only enter one so June entered the other in her name. June won a first place ribbon and some money too, which really amused her family. She said she will be taking a trip to Cordova, Alaska to spend time with her son and his family. She guesses she will be doing some fishing and moose hunting. Can't wait to hear more on those exploits.

Bud Woods & his wife have relocated to Willows from Redding. He said it was a chore after living there for 32 years. Now they are closer to the kids and settling in.

Shirley Shoup & June McLean will be going on another bingo blowout and on to Las Vegas afterward in December. You go and win some big bucks!

Please remember to send in your **Annual Dues** (see page 19).

- **Bill Belcher**

The Haps in District 3

We just completed our Pre-Holiday party at the Peach Tree Country Club. As usual, we had a great turnout and a wonderful time. The next party will be held in April next year and will also be at the Peach Tree Golf and Country Club.

Lita Wells has stepped down, after many years of devoted time and energy, as the District 3 QCC Treasurer. **Carleen Hagen** has volunteered for the position and is now in full swing with those duties. Thank you, Carleen. She has her hands full as Treasurer and Membership Chairperson. Lita will be on the sidelines and attending meetings for guidance.

We wish all a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous and Happy New Year.

Please remember to send in your **Annual Dues** (see page 19).

- **Dan Johnson Sr.**

The Haps in District 4

District 4 did not submit an entry for this edition. Current news will be included in the next edition.

Please remember to send in your **Annual Dues** (see page 19).

The Haps in District 5

Hope you enjoyed a pleasant holiday season and will have a happy, healthy new year.

The annual Caltrans Holiday BBQ was held on December 6. I'm writing before this event happens, but I imagine we will once again enjoy a delicious meal and visiting with old friends.

Congratulations to **Robert Pavlik**, Senior Environmental Planner, on receiving the Governor's Historic Preservation Award in November. Bob was recognized for his talents as an advisor, author, poet, and historian, and for his participation in many civic and nonprofit organizations. Bob has also been involved in establishment of the Carrizo Plain National Monument, and he helped the BLM develop a resource management plan for this area.

In memoriam: **James S. Bland** passed away on September 27. Jim served in the Army Air Corp during WWII, repairing planes that flew supplies to China. He then attended Cal Poly and majored in engineering. Jim retired from Caltrans at the end of 1980.

Manuel Luiz passed away on November 9. He was a native of San Luis Obispo County and grew up on the family dairy farm. He served in the US Army in Korea following the Korean War. He was a heavy equipment operator for Caltrans and retired after 26 years of service. You may remember his pride and

joy, the yellow Chevy pickup, parked in the Maintenance yard.

I'm sorry that this letter is brief, but we haven't had much news of late. Please drop me a line and let me know what's happening in your part of the world.

Don't forget to pay your **dues for 2013** (if you're not in the "free" category).

- Kathleen Copeland

The Haps in District 6

This is going to be short because I have spent a lot of time in Oregon with my dad. He is now in the hospital with shingles, a blood clot in the leg, a kidney stone and bladder problems. So I'm heading back up in a couple of days. He is 96 so I guess we all have problems and should consider ourselves lucky to get to that age. A lot of us don't make it that far.

My aunt, Alma (**Ken Cartwright's** wife), is in Horizon Health at Herndon and Chestnut recovering from two heart surgeries, one to replace a valve and another to put in a pace maker. Recovery is slow going but she likes visitors.

A train tale from **Bill Bastian**:

I was born in Alameda in 1921 and after my brother arrived a couple of years later, I was sent to Grandma for several summers, (relief for mom). Grandma lived in Tuolumne and Grandpa tended a donkey engine in the woods every summer. The logging operation was only reached by narrow gauge railroad, some 30 miles up the Tuolumne River Canyon from the sawmill in town. I have a picture of me aboard a string of empty railcars on my way to the woods in 1926. We lived in a little shack alongside the tracks. Supplies came on the morning train of empty cars which could be heard approaching from afar as the geared Shay engine sounded like 60 but barely crawled up the steep curvy tracks. Time passed-- School, WWII, Division of Highways, first in District 3 and last in

6. It was in District 6 as the Asst. District Maintenance Engineer, I supervised the Permit Department and issued an oversize permit to move railroad equipment from District 10 to Sugar pine, just South of Yosemite. Lo and behold this was the engine and train of my childhood and now operates as a tourist attraction just 15 miles up the road from my house! - **Bill Bastian**

Thanks Bill for that great story. Anyone else have some interesting stories, please send them to me.

Because I am out of town so much now, I would really appreciate it if someone would step up and take over the District Director job. If you're so inclined or you know someone that would be good at it, please let me know by calling 559-974-3885 (my cell). I would be willing to help anyone that wants to take on the job. I had to cancel the Christmas Party this year so my apologies to all those that would have enjoyed it.

Please remember to send in your **Annual Dues** (see page 19).

-Terry Littleton

The Haps in District 7

The Miyako Inn in Downtown Los Angeles' Little Tokyo area once again hosted our festive Holiday Lunch Gala, on Saturday, December 1, 2012. I'll share the details in the March newsletter.

Monthly Group Meets:

If once a year is not enough, how about once a month? The **Tom Fera** Lunch Group is your ticket to exciting, blood pumping debate! These active and (dare I say) opinionated retirees meet on the second Wednesday of each month, except December. The next several meetings are: **January 9, 2013** at Joselito's West; **February 13, 2013** at the Steer N' Ale; **March 13, 2013** at the China

Olive; and **April 10, 2013** will be back at Joselito's West. The 2013 dates and addresses follow below:

RESTAURANTS AND PROPOSED LUNCHEON DATES FOR 2013

[Second Wednesday of every month except December]

January 9, 2013	Joselito's West
February 13, 2013	Steer N' Ale
March 13, 2013	China Olive
April 10, 2013	Joselito's West
May 8, 2013	Steer N' Ale
June 12, 2013	China Olive

China Olive Chinese Restaurant;

9224 Reseda Boulevard, Northridge, CA 91324;
(818) 998-3688

Joselito's West Mexican Restaurant;

7308 Foothill Boulevard, Tujunga, CA 91042;
(818) 951-2275

Steer N' Ale Restaurant;

3644 E. Foothill Boulevard, Pasadena, CA 91107;
(626) 796-2278

For more information about meetings, etc., contact: **Chuck O'Connell** at (661) 253-3428 or chuckoconnell@prodigy.net, or **Tom Gildersleeve** at (661) 259-6226 or tgilders@pacbell.net.

Tom Gildersleeve shared some of the intrigues of the **Tom Fera Lunch Group**. A discussion occurred about the Bakken Formation having immense oil reserves and debate whether they were being recovered. In an article titled "North Dakota's Bakken Oil Output Passes 600,000 Barrels a Day" by Bloomberg reporter Dan Murtaugh, dated Sep 14, 2012, Tom shared; "it appears... that the US is now meeting 83 percent of its energy demand from domestic sources. I've also read that there are predictions that in the next decade or two we will be energy independent. Apparently fracking is what is accounting for the recovery from the Bakken formation." And we thought Bakken was just strange spelling for a yummy breakfast meat...

Recent Contacts and Sightings

Marty Leis, martylinnoho@yahoo.com, wrote: "In reading the latest QCCer, [and] the passing of **Mel Hodges**, it reminded me of an E-mail I sent to the directors of the D-7 golf clubs last Dec[ecember], when **Keith Herman** passed on. I am passing that on to you, in the hopes that you could possibly include it in the next D-7 QCCer. I'm sure many people around the State, also knew many of these people." (Note: Keith's passing was reported in the March 2012 QCCer, but we still appreciate your input. -**Kirsten**)

The **Space Shuttle Endeavor** flew across the skies of L.A. in mid-September while, **Stewart** and **Kirsten Stahl**, **Marie Martin**, and **Bob Walters** attended a Fighter Aces Reunion in San Diego, however **Cheryl Powell**, was on hand to see it as it travelled from LAX to its new home at the California Science Center. Members of the Science Center, **Stewart** and **Kirsten** were able to attend the member preview day, in late October. Although it is a bit 'space worn', "It is an awesome sight". More awesome were the photos and video captured by **Thomas Ritter** and **Steve Devorkin**, of the Graphic Arts Unit, on the DO roof, and in boom trucks along the transit route.

Retirements:

Jim McCarthy, Deputy Director for Planning, has plans to "travel the world and golf". His celebration luncheon was held at the San Antonio Winery in April.

Robbie Miles who started her career in Graphic Arts and served faithfully in the Executive Office for several years, retired in July.

Ken Burkle, celebrated 42-years of service in August at the Elks Lodge in Downey, at a luncheon in his honor.

Jack Jung, who finished this career as the North Region engineering liaison in Maintenance, celebrated 30-years of service in September, with coffee and home-baked cupcakes.

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Roy Fisher, Division Chief for Construction, celebrated his departure in October for “greener” pastures, at Monterey Hills Steakhouse, in Monterey Park, after 30-something years of service.

Alan Empleo, a 35-year Maintenance veteran out of Lebec, celebrated his retirement in October.

Permit Engineer, **Kiumars “Ken” Pahlevani**, celebrated 25 years of service at Shiraz restaurant in October.

Junius Pierson, District Safety Chief, with 33-year of service, wrote of his November departure, “It is with mixed emotions that I must inform you that I am retiring from state service today. I will miss the friendship of my co-workers but at the same time I am looking forward to entering this new chapter in my life.”

Bob Vennard, of North Region Maintenance, will be celebrating his 39-plus years at a BBQ on December 13, 2012.

Road Last Traveled:

A big shock for several of us came in late October, to hear of the passing of **Richard “Dick” Murphy**, a Traffic legend, in March 2011. “His love was always Traffic Engineering, it was his passion, and I know he would have never stopped working if he had his way. His closest friends were at Caltrans and his world was the freeways of LA”, said **Darryl Murphy**, Dick’s son.

In late September, **Frank Chan** informed us of the passing of **Marvin Lim**, construction veteran, and graduate of Texas A&M.

Tom Gildersleeve reported the passing of **Ralph Goins**, Wednesday, October 17, 2012. **Ralph** worked in the East Region, District 7, Maintenance yard as a Caltrans Landscape Maintenance Worker.

Tom Gildersleeve, also reported the passing of **Perry Lowden, Jr.**, who He retired in 1994 after 40 years of service. **Perry** was a District 3 QCC

member. He received the Karl Moscovitz Award for Excellence in Traffic Engineering, was a member of the California Association of Traffic Engineers, and was with the Boy Scouts of America for 57 years. Perry’s memorial service was held on Friday, November 2nd, at St. John’s Episcopal Church in Marysville.

Christina Ruano reported the passing of **Irv Borow** on November 15. **Irv** had supervised Environmental Engineering, for several years, and volunteered at various events including a tour of Smithsonian Treasures, and the 1990 Census.

Be Like Tom, Terry, Christina and Frank!

You-betcha! But next time, how about some more happy news? All it takes is an e-mail, card or snail mail to stay in touch (and now I know some of you Tom Fera folks have iPads...). Please send your items, to: **Caltrans, attn: Kirsten Stahl, 100 S. Main St. Suite 100 MS 13, Los Angeles, CA 90012.** Phone 213-897-0470, or e-mail: kirsten.stahl@dot.ca.gov.

Tom reminds you that the District 7 QCC Director and Treasurer are available, and you can reach him directly at 17200 So. Stark Avenue, Cerritos, CA 90701-1822.

Please **send DUES (checks), membership applications and honorary member status information**, to Statewide QCC Secretary/Treasurer **Mike Ogilvie** directly (see page 19).

Wake Up!

No news may be good news to some, BUT for us, no news is BORING! So keep those cards and letters flowing! Don’t be shy, here a chance to be a spy! Or the roving reporter you always aspired to be... send items to **Kirsten**; without your news and updates, our section would be empty, and don’t think I’m joking.

Many thanks to the multitudes who forwarded information and who were not otherwise mentioned

above: **Chuck O'Connell, Maria Carmody, and Millie Yamada.**

- **Kirsten Stahl**

The Haps in District 8

Taylor and **Katie Smith** returned from another trip to Iowa, handling family matters there. They continue to organize get togethers now and again. At the last one **Ernie Parke** came and was looking good! Others attending were **Jeanette** and **Gil Daab**, **Louise** and **Dick Haight**, and **Linda** and **Wes Grimes**.

Jim and **Linda Miller** took a trip to Hawaii, followed by a motor home trip to Arizona. . . Roses to **Bonnie Powell** dealing with stomach problems and also to **Gary Mayer** who is reported having health problems. **Wes** and **Linda Grimes** did "staycations" this year, attending a four-day destination wedding with relatives from Chicago, and also attending a corporate retreat near Monterey. They report both events were a "blast".

Glenn and **Rita Mills** retired in Morro Bay, got a visit from **Wes** and **Linda** as well . . . their new home sports a view of the "Rock", as well as trophy Marlins caught off Cabo San Lucas . . . **Bill Gilhaus** showed up at the Wednesday Coffee Klatch recently . . . Roses to **Dick Haight** recovering from hip surgery.

Andy Machan, working in Traffic is on his way to pick up a new motor home in Iowa and getting ready for retirement.

Deborah Robertson, retired from District 7 and a former District 8 employee, has been elected Mayor of the City of Rialto. Congratulations! Deborah has long been active in public service and intends to bring renewed leadership to the City.

Roses again to **Katie Smith** . . . she was shopping and got "bowled over" by a lady rapidly pushing a

shopping cart to get the latest bargains, turning the corner and knocking Katie down. Katie was saved from hitting the ground face first by a gentleman nearby who barely caught her. The bargain hunter disappeared without so much as "I'm sorry".

Caltrans District 8 ladies met at Nena's Mexican Restaurant for their occasional lunch and a good time was had by those in attendance. Those attending included **Sybille Phillips** and her daughter, **Sandra**, **Mary Bermudez**, **Janice Feenstra**, **Linda Grimes** and **Beverly Both**.

Roses to **Mary Bermudez** in the loss of her sister, **Connie**, and to the rest of Mary's extended family.

Roses also to **Craig Lotze** as he continues dealing with medical problems and **Marsha** as she helps Craig along.

Karen Meadows recently remodeled her kitchen, dining area and living room. She installed a fabulous new kitchen, including new cabinets, floor and appliances and expanding into a "great room", with new furnishings to boot . . . but now is embroiled in a nightmare since a bathroom fire has made her whole home uninhabitable until the insurance company acts. Even then it is a sad time for Karen.

Gerald and **Judie Brown** are gearing up for the holidays, hosting a fabulous Bunco Group Dinner, then preparing to do petting zoos for battered women shelters and several parades . . . which causes them to miss our Quarter Century Christmas Luncheon.

I recently received a note from **Dave Felix** with his renewal dues. He is still active in retirement with volunteer work at his church, with the American Legion, and his grandchildren's school and athletic events with his wife, **Sadie**. Of course, there's a Vegas trip now and then. He and his wife have their annual ventures to Texas to visit family and take in a Cowboy's game during football season. Conflicts, conflicts, conflicts . . . busy and sorry they won't be

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able to make it to the Christmas Lunch . . . but tell everyone “Hi” for them and they wish all of us a happy and blessed holiday season.

Bobby Luna has retired after 30 years of service, ending his career with the Bridge Maintenance crew. A luncheon was held in his honor at the Magana/Ortega Maintenance Yard. Congrats, Bobby!

If you haven't driven by the site of the old District 8 office at Third Street and Arrowhead Avenue in San Bernardino, you should plan to do so. Construction of the new San Bernardino County Court House is well underway with the erection of the steel frame nearing completion. The Court House will be 11 stories high and provide 377,750 square feet of office space at an estimated cost of 325 million dollars. Wow!!!

On a Sad Note:

Ed Gritters, 83, passed away at Redlands Community Hospital on November 3, 2012. Ed was an Iowa native and came to Redlands in 1948. He taught at a Christian school for six years prior to joining the CA Division of Highways. He served as a Resident Engineer in Construction prior to his promotion to the Deputy District Director of the new Maintenance Division and later as the Deputy District Director of Project Development. He retired in December, 1987, and was a longtime supporter of the QCC and will be missed by his large family and many friends.

Regrettably we must report on the passing of **Tom Jeannotte** on November 1, 2012, who succumbed to injuries from an auto accident in October. Tom retired as a CT Electrician II with 30 years of service. Condolences to his brother, **Bob Jeannotte**, retired District 8 Caltrans Electrical Engineer and the rest of his family, along with his Caltrans family.

We heard that **Fred Strait** who retired from Right of Way passed away at the age of 87.

Al Lawrence passed away in October. He was retired from Traffic Electrical Design.

For over 20 years the Quarter Century Club has held our Christmas Parties at The Gourmet Restaurant on Highland Avenue in San Bernardino, booking the reservation a year in advance. The dining area was always adequate, the staff very helpful and accommodating, and the food was good.

Unfortunately, The Gourmet closed with the death of the owner, **John Coulos**. Our Christmas Party this year will be held at **Hannah's Café** on Highland Avenue on December 12th at 12:00 noon. Hannah's is just a couple of blocks west of The Gourmet so members don't have far to go.

REMEMBER – Dues are now due and payable. Be sure to complete the options form and dues (Page 19) and return to our Secretary/Treasurer, **Marsha Lotze**, or **Mike Ogilvie**, Statewide QCC Secretary/Treasurer.

That's all for District 8 this year. We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year.

- Marsha Lotze

The Haps in District 9

District 9 did not submit an entry for this edition. Current news will be included in the next edition.

Please remember to send in your **Annual Dues** (see page 19).

The Haps in District 10

MERRY CHRISTMAS !!
Note: There will be no meeting on the last Tuesday which is December 25th, Christmas Day. See everyone next year on the last Tuesday of the month starting with January

29th for breakfast at 7:30 a.m. at Denny's at March Lane and I-5 in Stockton.

On Tuesday, October 9th, a District 10 retiree's luncheon was held at U.J. Restaurant in Stockton with 40 folks present. The guest speaker was **Rob Feckner**, President of CalPERS Board of Administration. This is a bi-annual event so look for the next luncheon in April.

At the October 30th breakfast there were 27 in attendance including **Virginia Evinger**, who says she is still celebrating birthdays. Happy Birthday Virginia, who was 92 on October 19th, 2012.

At the November 27th breakfast there were 28 in attendance including **Cliff Rice** for the first time. We also welcomed **Tony Segovia** who returned after a long absence. It was also learned that **Dana Williard** had broken his hip, but is on the mend. Get well Dana!

On Dec 4th another annual reunion of the Ghosts of Christmas past will have happened at Club Pheasant Restaurant in West Sacramento. As in the past, there should be about 40 present for this luncheon.

From **Bill Selling** :

Hi Y'all: Well here we go again and this time it is back to VA to spend Christmas with our daughter and her family. We fly out on Wednesday 5 Dec and return on Thursday 27 Dec. One of the highlights of the visit will be when we all go up to Arlington National Cemetery and help lay Christmas Wreathes on the graves of our fallen service members! We plan on laying wreathes on three of our former Cal National Guard members...should be a very moving experience!! We wish y'all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!! Love to all, **Bill & Darlene**.

Please remember to send in your **Annual Dues** (see page 19).

- **Brian Young**

The Haps in District 11

SAVE THE DATE for our annual Caltrans District 11 QCC banquet luncheon to be held in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park at the Barra Barra Saloon (formerly the Hamburguesa) on Thursday January 17th, 2013 at 11:30 AM. We expect around one hundred attendees so don't miss out. Besides great company and fabulous food, we will entertain nominations from the floor for the next District 11 QCC Director. There will also be wonderful raffle prizes. Flyers for the event will be mailed out along with your dues renewal form so make sure to check your mailbox. Hope to see you there!

Our monthly Romeo meeting continues to be well attended with anywhere from 30 to 40 attendees. Come join us on the third Wednesday of every month. We start gathering at 8 AM and place our orders by 8:30 AM at the Denny's at the corner of Fletcher Parkway and Navajo Road.

Recent Retirements:

Bill Valle, Chief Deputy, retired in August and went to work for the City of Chula Vista.

Patsy Sigler, Administration, retired in July.

Barbara Rominus, retired after 34 years, as the West Region Maintenance Manager II.

Kim Sturmer, Associate Transportation Planner, retired recently after working for 31 years. During his career he worked in almost all areas of Transportation Planning in District 11.

Cindy Urban retired recently and her luncheon was very well attended. Her last position was in Design/Engineering Support Services.

David Bates, after 28 years with Caltrans, retired from the Boulevard Maintenance Station as a Highway Maintenance Leadworker.

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Wanda Blount, after 30 years with Caltrans, is retiring from her last job assignment with IT.

We wish **Bill, Patsy, Barbara, Kim, Cindy, David** and **Wanda** the best for a great retirement!

Road Last Traveled:

On July 22, 2012, **Sabrina Vasquez**, a TET in Advanced Planning for 15 years, passed away. She is the daughter of another long time Caltrans employee, **Tim Vasquez**, who survives her.

Jay Gitten, a TE in Structure Construction, passed away on July 25, 2012. He worked the last 11 years on District 11 contracts.

Jean Fields, Caltrans Administrator in the Permit office, died on July 31, 2012.

We were deeply saddened to learn that Caltrans District 11 Transportation Engineering Technician **Larry Williams** lost his long battle with leukemia in September. Larry served the people of California for the past 20-plus years and most recently worked for the Maintenance Division, Maintenance Engineering, Minor B Projects.

Doug Arrick, Deputy District Director of Right of Way when he retired, passed away in October 2012. He is survived by his wife **Pat**, who also was a long time District 11 employee.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family and friends of **Sabrina, Jay, Jean, Larry** and **Doug**.

On a brighter note, please send me your stories, notes or updates so I can include in the next edition.

Please remember to send in your **Annual Dues** (see page 19).

- **Jösan Feathers**

The Haps in Central

The Holiday Luncheon was December 12, 2012 at the Dante Club. We will report on this in the next edition.

From **Elizabeth Abersold**:

My son, Mike, returned safely from Afghanistan in June. He is stationed in Germany. Mike plans to retire in 2013 with 30 years of dedicated service to our country.

I attended my two granddaughters, Flo and Jordan's, college graduations in the Nashville area in August. They were held one day apart so I was thankful to make one trip.

I celebrated Thanksgiving in Colorado Springs with my cousin Kathie and family. I toured "Garden of the Gods" which was awesome. Among the other sites were: Pikes Peak, Sleeping Giant, and the Colorado Air Force Academy.

My oldest Granddaughter, Louise, is expecting a baby girl in February, which will be my first great grandchild.

From **Kay and Hugh Griffin**:

Our 9 year old twin granddaughters in Oklahoma City had a break in October from their year-round school schedule so we decided a trip to OKC was in order and then a trip to northern Oklahoma and Branson, Missouri would be good for the four of us. We drove from OKC to Branson in one day and stayed at the Chateau on the Lake for four nights. We spent a day at theme park Silver Dollar City, rode the Branson Scenic Railway train into the Ozark Mountains in Arkansas, toured the fish hatchery, enjoyed lunch and a show aboard the Showboat on the lake, watched the Chinese acrobats perform, and the girls swam every day in the Chateau's indoor heated pool.

Heading back to OKC we went west to Bartlesville, the headquarters of Phillips 66 Oil Company. We toured the home of the founder, Frank Phillips, and then visited a retreat he built 30 minutes from Bartlesville. This 3700 acre wildlife preserve has

buffalo, elk, antelope and other wildlife wandering the grounds you drive through to get to the home and museum. The area is called Woolaroc (woods, lake, rock) and is well worth the time to visit. From there we traveled to Claremore, Oklahoma and the Will Rogers Museum, before heading back to OKC.

On a sad note:

Allen Wrenn reported that his wife **Joyce** lost her struggle with cancer and passed away on September 26. Joyce was herself a retiree from state service with almost 40 years. About 35 years of that time was with the Division of Highways/Caltrans. She began her career in 1957 in District 11 and retired from a position in Sacramento Headquarters in 1997. She also worked in District 3 for several years in the 1970s and 80s. Her other state service included a short time at Food and Agriculture in Sacramento and about 3 years at Humboldt State University in Arcata.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to **Allen** and his family and friends.

From a letter **Robert O. Watkins** wrote to the District 2 District Director, **John Bulinski**:

“You might be interested to know that this 82 year old Caltrans retiree rode the 661 miles from Ridgefield, Washington to Folsom, California in nine riding days, an average of 73 miles a day. (I would ride two days, then rest and go back to my stopping point and ride on.) The hardest day was from the state line just north of Doris, California on US 97 to the I-5 Sweetbrier interchange south of Dunsmuir. As you know this requires riding over the 5200 foot Mt Hebron summit you referred to in your letter. My last day was the 100 miles from Chico to Folsom.

This was probably my last long ride. My sag-wagon driver has been putting up with my flat tires for almost fifty-nine years. She says enough is enough.” - ROW

Please remember to send in your **Annual Dues** (see page 19).

- **Gary and Julie Bush**

Hard to Believe

By Butch Biendara

The cold hard truth about cold winters in Minnesota is hard to believe.

It starts getting cold with the first frost of September and continues getting colder well after the beginning of the year even as the days start getting longer in January.

Early one morning at milking time at the coldest part of the night before dawn in late January, the moon was just a thin line of a silver crescent giving as little light as the stars that sucked any remaining heat out into space. As that crescent slowly moved west toward Pine Ridge, the bottom corner dropped into the tops of the tall pine trees and the earth shuddered, as it froze solid.

I was puzzled of course but as the darkness gave way to light and the sun rose to a bright clear morning I could see for certain that the moon was still frozen to the top of Pine Ridge. I expected that as the day warmed up, the moon would certainly thaw and move on in its orbit. Well the day did warm up to 50 degrees, below zero, for the day's high. And as the sun went to high noon I lost all hope that it would set near the moon. The low winter path of the sun took it way south to set in the low swampland and another dark night began with the moon frozen to the top of Pine Ridge.

Pine Ridge had been in my family for generations and I feared that I might be held responsible for this crisis. So when the sun came up the next morning I put on my heavy parka and snowshoes, filled a bucket with kerosene, and headed off across the snow-covered fields to Pine Ridge.

It took me until midafternoon to get to the base of the ridge and looking back to the farmyard I saw a wide dark band of gray laying to the north of my snowshoe tracks. The sun had passed low to the south and my long shadows had continually frozen onto the white snow as I trudged along.

I found some dry tinder inside a rotten log and some dead twigs from a bush for kindling to start a fire but the bucket of kerosene had frozen solid. I had to dig out a few small chips with a hunting knife and it took 20 minutes with a big reading glass lens to first melt the frozen kerosene and then ten minutes more to warm up the matches before they would light. Soon I had a good brush fire and then forest fire burning up the slope of Pine Ridge.

But remember now, that moon had been frozen in place for about a day and a half from one early morning to the now second, late afternoon.

As the forest fire burned higher and hotter nearing the moon's location I was amazed to see that on the final instant when the moon thawed and broke free, it zipped across the sky to retake its position in a nice clear moonrise on the eastern horizon.

The sun and the moon rise and set at different times of the day throughout the year, but the sun is always directly overhead at noon every day, not so the moon. The New Moon sets with the sun but it is a bit slower to orbit every day, so that two weeks later, the Full Moon is just rising as the sun is setting. It got behind that one cold Minnesota winter and has never been able to catch up. And now you know the truth about cold Minnesota winters.

Events

Got a group that meets regularly? Let your director know and we'll add it to the event calendar.

District 1 -

Caltrans retirees and QCC members meet on the 3rd Thursday of the months of January, April, July and October at 11:30 am at the Samoa Cookhouse.

Contact **John Sherman** at jsherman1@Humboldt1.com
or call (707) 498-2629 for details.

District 2 -

Retired Caltrans Ladies Lunch Bunch meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 11:30 AM, location varies.

Contact **Judy Tucker** at linedancerjudyt@citlink.net

Retired folks meet on the 3rd Monday of each month between 7:30 and 9 am at the District Office snack bar at 1657 Riverside Drive Redding.

District 3 -

Weekly Tuesday Coffee/Breakfast at 8:30 am at the "Green House" in the Raley's Shopping Center in Placerville.

Contact: **Doug Becker** 530-622-1665,
doug.becker@att.net

District 4 -

The Caltrans Lunch Bunch meets on the second Tuesday of every month.

Contact: **Ed Coble** 925-645-4219,
edcoble49@astound.net

Administration Retirees Lunch meets on the third Wednesday of each month at the Mexicali Rose Restaurant in downtown Oakland at 11:30am.
Contact **Anita Appiano** (aappiano@pacbell.net) or **Kathy Freeman** (kathy.freeman1@att.net).

The North Bay Caltrans Retirees meet on the 2nd Tuesday of every month.

Contact: **Jim Boulter** 707-546-3097,
jboulter@comcast.net

District 5 -

Contact **Kathy Copeland**: 805-544-1834
bcopel4674@aol.com

District 6 -

The Caltrans Retiree Breakfast meets at 9 am on the third Wednesday in March and September at the Waffle House on Route 68 in Lindsay. Contact: **Don Phillips** 559-781-2057

Informal Coffee at 8 am on Thursdays at Country Waffles at the NW corner of Herndon and Cedar.

An informal District 6 bunch meets at Santa Fe Basque Restaurant at 3110 N Maroa Ave, south of Shields in Fresno the first Monday of the month.

District 7 -

The Tom Fera Monthly Luncheon Club meets on the second Wednesday of the month (except December) in Los Angeles.

Contact: **Chuck O'Connell** at (661) 253-3428 or chuckoconnell@prodigy.net, or **Tom Gildersleeve** at (661) 259-6226 or tgilders@pacbell.net.

January 9, 2013 Joselito's West

February 13, 2013 Steer N' Ale

March 13, 2013 China Olive

See **D-7 Haps** for addresses and phone numbers

District 8 -

Every Wednesday morning at 9:00 Construction Retirees and anyone else interested meet at Coco's Restaurant in San Bernardino.

District 9 -

Contact: **Lance Hinek**, 760-873-3885, hinek@suddenlink.net

District 10 -

For details on events contact **Brian Young** 209-329-3445 cell or blyoung365@gmail.com.

Lenny's Huddle meets at 7:30 am on the last Tuesday of the month at Denny's, I-5 and March Lane in Stockton.

Contact: **Stan Randolph**, 209-957-1278, stanran3672@aol.com

District 11-

ROMEOS (Retired Old Men Eating Out) meets at Denny's, Navajo Road at Fletcher Parkway at 8:30 am the third Wednesday of every month.

Contact: **Butch Biendara**, 858-279-5054 EagleAyerie@hotmail.com

Annual Luncheon
Thursday January 17, 2013, 11:30 AM
At the Barra Barra Restaurant in Old Town
More details to follow

Central District -

Contact **Gary or Julie Bush**
530-642-8208
zbusharosa@wildblue.net

To Honorary Members

Have you seen this option-

FREE PRINTED COPIES

on the membership renewal form? Many of you have and didn't know exactly what it was for, or thought it was just a free subscription if you checked the box. Well, here is the rest of the story.

If you are at least 80 years of age, you are classified as an Honorary member of the QCC. Being an Honorary member qualifies you for a discounted rate for the printed QCCer, or the electronic version of the QCCer for free (if you have a working email address). These dues rates are less than our cost of producing and sending the QCCer to you, so it's a pretty good deal. The other free option is for Honorary members who cannot afford the \$5 or \$10 rate and do not have a working email account. In other words, paying the dues would be a hardship for them. In this case, the QCC Constitution allows for the free delivery of the printed QCCer, IF the Honorary member makes a confidential request to their QCC District Director, AND the Director provides written approval. This written approval is best sent along with the completed renewal form to the QCC Secretary/Treasurer.

So, if you think this may apply to you, don't hesitate to contact your QCC District Director. We don't want any QCC members to be left out.

New Members

Welcome

D-10 Kenneth Yamashita