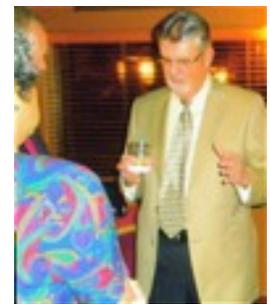




# Tire Tracks

A Great Christmas Party, A New Year Coming,  
and A New Spirit of Optimism and Joy!



## President's Letter

As 2011 slips into history, it's time to prepare for another year of Sedona Car Club events.

Our thanks to David and his board for their contributions throughout the year.

In addition to representing the club as president, David, Rachel and the car show committee put on an excellent show in September. Good job! As touring chairman, Al gave us a series of memorable events, culminating with a wonderful Christmas party at the Golden Goose. During the party Al presented four nominees (David Lombardi, Lon Walters, Dan Otts and "yours truly") for the Bent Hubcap award. Dan won by popular acclaim for racing without the steering wheel attached to the steering column. Congrats to Dan!

The weather, again, managed to prevent most of us from participating in the Cottonwood parade—it snowed here!.....

It's time now to get those membership renewals to Sam. He needs the renewal dues by January 31st in order to include you in the 2012 roster, and keep you on the membership roll.

Thank you for electing me as your president. The competition was formidable! I'll do my best in 2012, the year for the U.S. Presidential election, the Arizona Centennial celebration of statehood and the ending date on the Mayan calendar! Happy New Year!

*Larry Currie*



## Editorial

### I Hope You Too Make A New Years Resolution?

I seldom make resolutions, but this year I will. I am very concerned about the state of our nation and the systemic gridlock that seems to block every action or program, whether private or public, that might help us get back on our feet, or at least make us believe that something is being done.

A good friend sent us a note that I want to share with you, in part:

Warren Buffett, in a recent interview with CNBC, offers one of the best quotes about the debt ceiling: "I could end the deficit in 5 minutes," he told the interviewer. "You just pass a law that says that any time there is a deficit of more than 3% of GDP, all sitting members of Congress are ineligible for re-election."

The note suggested that an amendment to the Constitution would do a lot of good. If everybody contacted twenty others using the online media and cell phone messaging, it could be ratified in a hurry. The note also suggested "The Congressional Reform Act of 2011". The main points include: no tenure and no pension, salary paid only during elected term, Congress members pay into social security, all existing retirement funds transfer to Social Security, Congress members buy their own retirement plans and health insurance, pay raises set at the lower of CPI increase or 3%, and Congress abides by the same laws they pass for American citizens.

I like the sound of this. I even want to add a few suggestions of my own. For instance: to reduce the waste and stress of frequent re-election cycles and to eliminate career office-holding, members of the House and the Senate will serve five year terms and may be re-elected only once; the President will be elected for five year terms and may be re-elected only once. In 1785 the life expectancy of males was less than 40 years but today it is more than 80 years; Justices of the Supreme Court and all Federal Courts will be elected to serve five year terms and may be re-elected only once. The Supreme Court must decide cases in accord with both the Constitution and long-term social and cultural changes in American society, and they will answer to the voters.

The Founders' design of divided powers will be restructured to prevent gridlock and enhance cooperation. The legal domains of the House and the Senate will be redefined such that each shall (once again) have clear and exclusive powers and responsibilities not overlapping with the other. Both legislative bodies will be apportioned on the basis of population. Each citizen's vote will have equal weight with all others. The Electoral College will be eliminated. Elections will be decided by popular vote totals. The office of the President will be redefined as administrative, ending the public expectation that he or she decides everything and is responsible for everything that does or does not happen. Thus, it will be easier to tell which branch of government is and which is not doing their job. Private contractors doing the work of government, will be counted as employees of the government for accounting purposes, re-establishing truth about the size of government and the full range and cost of public services., including the Military.

There's a lot more to say ... about politics, political parties, elections, corporatism and lobbyists ... but this is already too long. Now, back to our new year resolutions. **Let's all resolve to talk more with each other, respectfully, directly, openly, honestly and in depth, about national affairs and the future we choose, or not.**

Post Script: If you can, take a look at the December issue of the AARP Bulletin, The feature, "Your World: What's Wrong With Washington?", covers Polarization, Permanent Campaign, Citizen Shortcomings, Dysfunction by [System] Design, and Special Interests. It offers 5 Things You Can Do. The Bulletin also reports poll results showing that 60% of older citizens think campaigns should last Less than six months and only 3% favor More than one year. Hmmm! RLB

**Theodore Roosevelt attacked judicial supremacy, believing it "both absurd and degrading to make a fetish of a judge or of anyone else."**

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## CLUB NEWS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

### BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

#### Happy Birthday To:

Sam Pietrofitta, 01/01

Alan McEvoy, 01/06

John Duff, 01/11

Diane Carson, 01/17

Al Moss, 01/06

Cindy Motensen, 01/30

No January Anniversaries

### LITTER LIFTERS

Luke Lukich has agreed to assume this role in 2012. This is your call to volunteer. Dates will be announced.

### CLUB MEETING

The General Meetings of the Sedona Car Club are held at 7 PM on the second Tuesday of each month except June, July and August, at the Sedona Library, Tuesday. Be sure to attend.

### BOARD MEETING

The Board meets on the first Tuesday of each month, at 8:30 AM, at the Cousins' clubroom. All members are invited to attend.

### Club Dues Notice

Club dues for 2012 are due and should be paid before January 31, 2012, to ensure that your name and other data will be included in the Club Roster. If you haven't received your Renewal Application, please call Sam Pietrofitta,

Treasurer, at 928 282-3801. Thank you for your support.

### Certified Appraiser

David Dirlam, a long-term friend of SCC, wishes to announce that he has become a Certified Agent for Auto Appraisal Group. Since 1989, the AAG has been devoted to helping owners of antique, classic, and exotic automobiles to accurately establish the value of their vehicles. David can be reached at 928 778-0334, or AAG at 800 848-2886. AAG offers a reduced rate to all car club members.

### OFFICERS AND BOARD

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LARRIE CURRIE

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

MARTIN GLINSKY

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT,

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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TOURS & EVENTS

AL MOSS

HIGHWAY CLEANUP PROGRAM

LUKE LUKICH

MEMBER AT LARGE

ED PITTMAN



What you don't want to see before the  
Cottonwood Christmas Parade!

## The Taciturn Male ... A Different Kind of Road Trip Part Three: A Noble Pilgrimage To Old Virginny.

Review: While in a creative trance, I was interrupted by my loyal and uncharacteristically impatient wife. I give her a flippant brush-off, and retreat back into my trance. But I am bothered by her comments about my taciturn ways. I wonder if there might be a taciturn character trait passing through many generations. I decide to use "time travel" and scientific "thought experiments" to investigate the question. I begin by looking at a hunting trip, involving me, as a pre-schooler, with my father, but my own emotional memories spoil it for our purpose. So I switch to a piece of family history involving my great-grand parents around 1840, and this proves more productive. Encouraged, I decide to travel back to 1640, when my namesake immigrated to the Virginia Colony.

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It is the next day and I am anxious to begin. After burning a lot of midnight oil I feel as ready as I can be. In my mind I begin to run down what I know about Great Britain on the Border, in the year 1640. Ommmm.

Scotland and England, two sovereign countries, share a common border. For nearly two millennia the Border has been a frontier wasteland, lawless, and extremely unstable. Cattle rustling, murder, arson and pillaging is the common way of life from the 14th to the 17th Century.

The countryside is controlled, to the extent that any control actually exists, by Reivers, a mixed lot of raiders who strike at will. The Reivers come mostly from Scotland, but also from the English side, due to overlapping family ties or any other useful reason. Loyalty to either country depends on the particulars of the situation. A new word, blackmail, is used to describe the common tactic of surviving by paying the Reivers for "protection" from the constant wars and the raids. There is little incentive for farming because crops are easily burned and cattle rustling is the principal business of Border families.

No stigma attaches to this way of life; it is in fact both expected and is regarded as commendable. All classes are involved, including the very soldier/farmer class whose noble descendants now govern the region ... but in name only. In 1603 King James I, known to Americans mostly for his biblical translation, imposes a union between England and Scotland under a single king; he names it Great Britain. He is furious about conditions on the ancient Border, so he issues a Proclamation against "all rebels and disorderly persons" which leads to hundreds of arrests and hangings over the next five years.

Violence continues well into the 17th Century, albeit drawing-down to a much lower level. There is "peace" in the "Middle Shires", perhaps for the very first time. Hadrian's Wall, built by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century Romans, and the Pele Towers and fortified castles first established under William the Conqueror, 11<sup>th</sup> Century, and restored later by Henry III are going to ruin as their military value continues to decline. Agriculture is slowly and reluctantly reintroduced by the soldier/farmers, although they certainly miss the exciting days of the past. A new middle class of tradesmen and merchants is emerging. The displaced sector of the population are at loose ends; many are escaping to the growing cities, some have become mercenaries in the European wars, and others are greatly attracted by the risks and unprecedented possibilities in the colonies, then being formed on the American frontier."

These conditions are the context in which Ralph Blenkinsop, the 20 year old son of a minor soldier/farmer/aristocrat asks his father for an audience and waits impatiently to make a proposition. The call comes, and Ralph enters the hall with an air of apparent self confidence. His father says nothing, so Ralph begins. "As you know, there has not been much happening around here for years and years, and since I'm not in line for inheritance, I think the time has come for me to stop living on your largesse, which is little or nothing, and make a move on my own. I will need your support, to be sure, but some money now, enough to get me started, will save you much ..."

The father interrupts, "I've been expecting this for a long time. Nothing's keeping you from making your move! You're free to go any time you choose, but don't expect any money from me! I don't have it!"

Ralph continues, unfazed, "I know that money is dear and what I intend to do will take very little because I what I need most is a form of support that actually will make your life easier." The father says nothing, but Ralph knows that he has set his hook, so he moves in. "The Virginny Colony is growing by leaps and bounds. Practically the whole James River valley has been settled in just 20 years, and property further inland can now be claimed for free. I could claim a hundred acres in headrights myself, including my wife, and if I get her pregnant, I can claim another fifty. But if you give me only six of your "tenants", I could claim their headrights too, raising my holdings to nearly a whole section. And then, if I play things real close, I can sell off the headrights to raise cash, and I can get four or five years of free labor from each of them before I send them off to claim their own land. There it is!"

The father pretends to ponder the proposition, but he has already made up his mind. "God almighty" he thinks to himself, "This 'un's probably even better than his older brother. He's got the right stuff to be the heir! He'll never inherit, but can I afford not to hedge my bet by backing him? I'll just see how far I have to go to meet him."

"What makes you think that you'd be doing me a favor by taking six of my best "tenants"? With the farming gettin' better, I need every hand!"

Ralph smiles slightly, "Things are a little hinkey around here, just now. The very winds seem to whisper in mens' ears, all about being freemen, getting off the land and more. I know at least six of the tenants who are gettin' real restless, and need to be culled out before they spoil all the rest. I can handle them! The frontier promises more opportunity than they can even imagine, and I can get their best from them before they catch on that working hard for somebody else is just working hard, no matter here or out on the frontier. I'll keep them too tired to make trouble. When they do get restless again, I'll be done with them anyhow. So make your own life a little easier. I'll take this load off your back. All I need is enough money to get us to Virginny. I know just what to do when get there."

The father is impassive, but he really likes what he is hearing, "I might spare two, but I'll need a share of the profits, when they come."

"Of course!", Ralph mutters, then ... "Make it five, and no share! The money's my right, anyhow!"

Six months later, in 1640, Ralph arrives in James City County, Virginia Colony, with his pregnant wife and four males. His first business is to sell all seven headrights. Then he heads out to Chesterfield County, the frontier, where he claims 2,000 acres of free land, and sets up his own plantation. He never looks back.

Back in the present, I sit in stunned silence. What about those old family stories of how the first Ralph had left England to escape the tyranny of the English government? All lies and self justifications? The evidence suggests a healthy measure of skepticism, at the least. It appears most likely that my namesake was a ruthless SOB, a true product of the Border culture and a prime example of the men it produced. His "wish to escape the tyranny of King James" was only a wish to recapture the lawless self-serving life that was his heritage. Beneath his taciturn manner, there was a deep pool of conniving selfishness, inflated sense of entitlement and casual disregard for others, beyond whatever personal benefits he could extract from them. On the positive side, maybe, Ralph's descendants account for about 90% of the Blankenships who live in America today, but that includes the owner of the deadliest coal mine in West Virginia history, so ... maybe not?

Before I descend into an even deeper funk, I resolve to risk undertaking a final thought experiment, all the way back the very dawn of modern mankind. I know so little about the social history of those times, there being only archaeological evidence. But, how hard can it be to guess?

(to be continued)

RLB



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## In Memoriam

**David Ellsworth, charter member and President (1991) of the Sedona Car Club. He led the establishment of the Sedona United Methodist Church.**

**Tom Dawson, former buyer for the Harrah Car Museum, in Reno, NV, and loyal member of the Sedona Car Club, passed away on December 17th.**

**We wish for their families the comfort of knowing that we cherish their friendship and will miss their presence.**

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## Upcoming Events, Tours and Meetings

Plan to attend the general meeting at the Sedona Library, Tuesday, January 10th, at 7 PM. An AF pilot speaker, coffee with treats, and great conversations are in the offing.

Following is a tentative schedule of activities for 2012.

Thursday, January 19th. Breakfast at Rocks Springs Cafe, then on to Phoenix for the RM Auction, and the Bonhams Auction. Details to come.

Thursday, February 9th. Lunch at the Grasshopper Grille (new owner).

Friday, February 17th, off to Firebird Raceway for the National Drags.

Saturday, March 3rd, participate in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Sedona.

Sunday, March 11th, watch for the Wheels of Britain.

Saturday,, March 24th, the 6th Not Very Annual Garage Sale Rally.

Friday, April 6th, off to the Asylum in Jerome, for the Full Moon Tour and dinner.

Saturday, April 14th, come to the Annual Southwest Unique Little Car Meet; A fun event in Phoenix!

Saturday, April 28th, the Second Annual Car Display, at Basha's, in Sedona.

Sunday, May 13th, the Annual Mothers' Day Brunch, at Junipine. Don't miss this special gathering in the cool Canyon.

Tuesday, June 12th, the Annual Picnic will be held in the same leafy glen as last year.

July and August, the Annual Summer Hiatus and scattering.

## TIRE TRACKS

Sedona Car Club

P.O Box 748

Sedona, AZ 86339

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