

Senior Citizens' Driving Studied

Whether or not the driving skills of older citizens change or deteriorate with advancing age is being tested in a three-year study at the University of California at Los Angeles.

"We have focused a lot of attention on the young driver, but little research has been done at the other end of the age scale," says Dr. Slade Hulbert. "As in so many areas of driving behavior, we get a lot of guesses but few hard facts."

Dr. Hulbert, a research psychologist, and Prof. Harry W. Case, associate director of the institute of transportation and traffic engineering at UCLA, explain one basic purpose of their study.

"There have been a number of suggestions that at a certain age the driving privileges of older people be restricted or withdrawn. Such regulations, if arbitrarily pegged to chronological age alone, could prove to be quite harmful and unfair to many older drivers."

A sounder approach, the two investigators believe, is to base driving ability on scientific tests and standards which measure the motorist's motor skills, such as his coordination and reaction speed, and his judgmental skill in sizing up a situation.

As the first step, Drs. Case and Hulbert will consult with gerontologists, set up testing procedures and computer programs for the project, and select and interview 400 volunteers from retirement communities in the Greater Los Angeles area.

During the second year, 60 of the volunteers and a matching group of younger drivers will be tested on the UCLA driving simulator.

During the final year of the study, the mass of data from the interviews, the drivers' past records, and the simulator rides will be processed through a computer and analyzed by the UCLA staff.

Edward J. Meeman Dies

Edward J. Meeman, editor emeritus of The Memphis Press-Scimitar and conservation editor of The Scripps-Howard Newspapers, died at his farm home in suburban Memphis on Nov. 15. He was 77 year old.

Mr. Meeman served on the Board of Trustees of Science Service from 1953 until his death, attributed to a heart attack.

He was nationally known for his conservation efforts. He was a leader in the fight to make the 790-square-mile Smoky Mountains a National Park, and he helped create the 12,500-acre Shelby Forest near Memphis. Mr. Meeman is credited with helping to establish the Tennessee Valley Authority and then for TVA bringing TVA electrical power to western Tennessee.

When he first went to work as a reporter at the Evansville, Ind., Press, Mr. Meeman was an 18-year-old high school graduate. He rose to managing editor of that paper, and in 1921 was sent to Knoxville, Tenn., to found a Scripps-Howard paper, The Knoxville News.

Under Mr. Meeman's leadership, the News grew so swiftly that within five years it purchased the then 40-year-old Sentinel to become the Knoxville News-Sentinel. In 1931, Mr. Meeman was transferred to Memphis as editor of the Press-Scimitar. Under his leadership that newspaper doubled its circulation within 15 years.

The battles Mr. Meeman waged with Edward H. Crump, political leader of Memphis, made national headlines for years, reaching a climax when the late Sen. Estes Kefauver was elected to the Senate with the Press-Scimitar's support and against "Boss" Crump's opposition.

Mr. Meeman was also an outspoken advocate for civil rights, and was honored for this work when the National



Edward J. Meeman

Human Relations Award was presented to him in 1953 by the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

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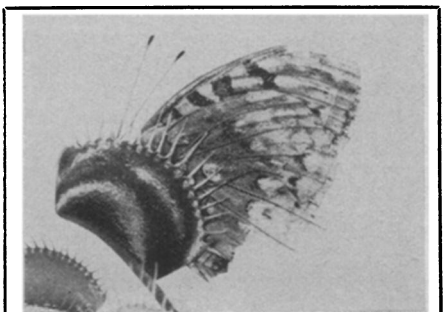
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