

Family Burdens That Keep Ted Back

By Vera Glaser

Washington

Young David Kennedy's recent brush with the law for reckless driving is part of the family burden Senator Edward Kennedy refers to when ruling himself out of the 1976 Presidential race, as he did again last week.

David, the 20-year-old son of the late Robert Kennedy, has secured a postponement to September 26 of his hearing in Woodstock, Va. A court clerk there expects the youth to settle by mail, paying a fine somewhere between \$88 and \$188.

David's offense: Driving 92 miles an hour in a 55-mile zone and failing to carry his license and car registration.

Senator Kennedy has conscientiously taken on the responsibility of riding herd on David and 12 other children of his late brothers, Jack and Robert. Add to that his own three youngsters, one of whom suffers from a rare form of cancer, and his wife, Joan, who has spent time at clinics specializing in alcoholism.



Joseph Kennedy III's reckless driving maimed a woman for life

Aside from a 1971 marijuana offense of Robert Kennedy Jr., the Kennedy "escapades" all involve automobiles, a recurring

reminder of Chappaquiddick the senator's roughest political problem.

Another, more serious, auto accident involving Robert Jr.'s brother, Joseph, resulted in a girl's being paralyzed for life.

But the Kennedy auto problems are not limited to the youngsters. Last October, for example, Joan Kennedy pleaded guilty to driving while intoxicated, paid a \$200 fine and lost her license for six months.

And early this year Robert's widow, Ethel, was charged with driving 90 miles an hour in New Hampshire. She asked the state trooper to fill out the ticket quickly because she was "trying to make a race."

The most tragic Kennedy car accident since Chappaquiddick involves the crown prince of the clan, Ethel's 22-year-old son, Joseph III, now a student at Harvard.

Ted's rugged, 6-foot, blond nephew has been tagged "a political natural" by the senator, who has put "Little Joe" to work on

the campaign trail and showed him off, in impeccable dinner clothes, at a gala Democratic fund-raiser.

Two years ago Joe overturned his Jeep on Nantucket Island, injuring his brother David and two young women. He was fined \$100. One of the girls, Pamela Kelley, now 20, suffered a fractured spine, is permanently paralyzed from the chest down and was recently awarded a settlement of about \$1 million.

The sum Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Kopechne received after their daughter Mary Jo died in Ted Kennedy's car at Chappaquiddick was a comparatively modest \$140,000. And, according to a source close to them, they are irked. (The figure was top secret until recently.)

Senator Kennedy has now revealed that he personally paid \$90,000 of the Kopechne settlement.

The Boston Globe, after an exhaustive series on Chappaquiddick, concluded that Kennedy had been given "VIP treatment" and that "inept" law enforcement had enabled him to avoid manslaughter charges.

Attorneys for the insurance



David and Bobby Kennedy Jr.: trouble with the law

involved in the larger Kelley settlement insist that no Kennedy money was included.

Their denials resemble those of the Kopechnes lawyer, Joseph F. Flanagan of Wilkes-Barre, Pa., who maintained repeatedly that Ted had paid nothing to the Kopechnes. Flanagan was left high and dry with the falsehood when

Kennedy finally owned up to the \$90,000.

The Kopechnes may have reason to regard themselves as short-changed, in light of a current trend toward ever-larger awards — some in the multimillion dollar range — to people injured by others' negligence or misconduct.