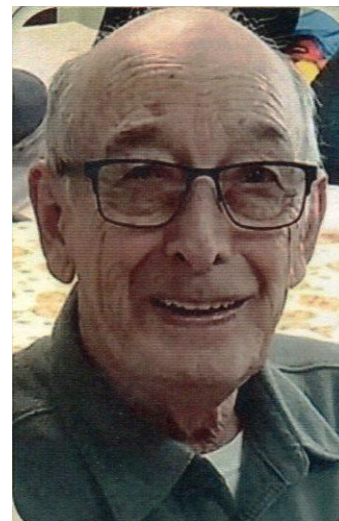


When Dave Vrieze passed away last year, I mentioned that Dave would be in the West Concord Hall of Fame if we had one. Well with the passing of two West Concord community stalwarts recently, I think I just might have to start that Hall of Fame. There would be several deserving people past and present who could and should be in such a Hall.

One would certainly be Peter Boe who is pictured here. Peter passed away on August 12th, 2019.



I mentioned in this column last December how I had the opportunity to visit with Peter and Signora at Boe Jeep on that snowy first Saturday in December when the town celebrates Christmas with lots of different events. Well it was quiet at Boe Jeep and Signora had the coffee and Christmas cookies out and I had enough of both to call it a meal. But what I really enjoyed was my almost an hour of listening to Peter talk about some West Concord history. Pete, even though he was retired from the fire department, was always a fireman at heart. He showed me the picture you see on this page which was in an old 4 page Fire Safety brochure that was published in 1967 by long time Kenyonite and Post Bulletin writer Harold Severson. In this picture is the first rescue vehicle the city had. Pete told the story how they weren't really trained or equipped to handle medical emergencies when they first started but they did have band-aids on the vehicle. They did eventually get trained and better equipped and they got very good at what they do.



Here are the West Concord Volunteer Firemen, always ready to answer your call for help at any time of the day or night, on Sundays or holidays as well as week days. Seated, left to right: Arlo Boe, lieutenant, rescue squad; Harry (Curly) Luff, assistant chief; Peter Boe, chief; John Ryg, second assistant chief, and Luvern (Butch) Maricle, captain, rescue squad. Standing, Burt Boe, Roger Espenson, Clayton Bishop, Robert Doyle, David Vrieze, Delmer Bartholomew, Burton Frederick, secretary; Ralph Bishop, Tom Fliccek, Clifford Ferguson, Pete Wilson, Louis Leach, Haven Wheeler and Lawrence Hughes. Missing from the picture: Maynard Flaaen, Kenneth Maricle and Schuyler Kent.

Pete kind of stared at this picture that has 19 of the then 22 volunteer firemen. After Dave Vrieze and Roger Espenson both passed away, Pete told me he was the lone survivor of all these firemen. Well sadly they are now all gone but not forgotten. Pete was the driving force to get this fire and rescue squad to be the best they could be. Pete served in the U.S. Army in Italy as a tank mechanic.

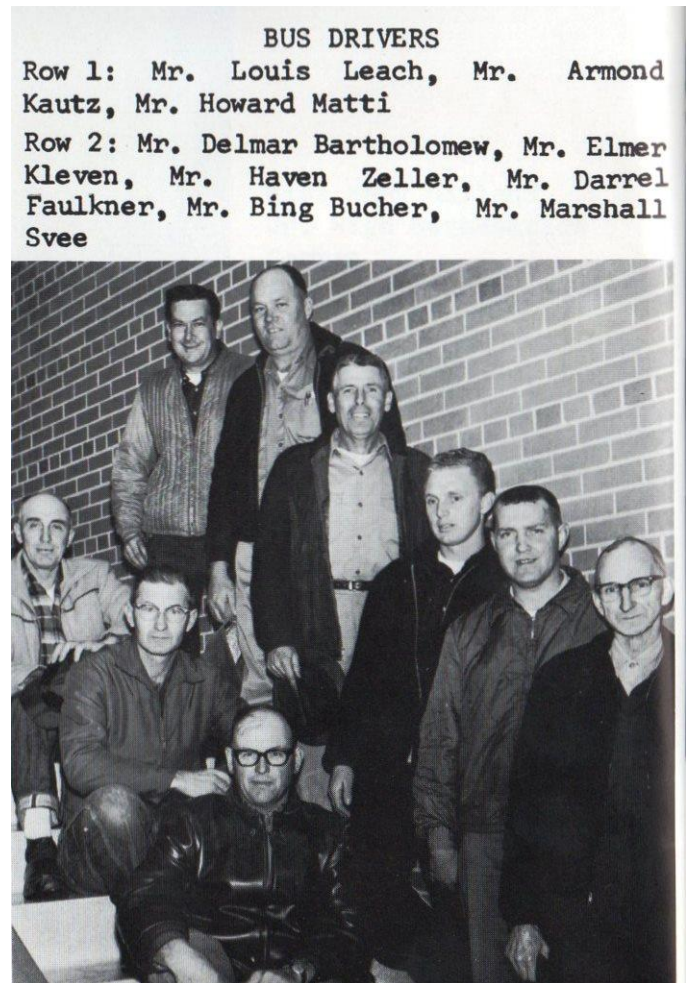
He was a civic leader too having served on the West Concord city council including the office of mayor and he was fire chief. When I spoke with Signora at the visitation, she told me she could have never found a better man. She was absolutely right. Peter was a true gentleman. Kind and calm and had a great sense of humor. His yellow 1947 Jeep Willy was parked outside the funeral home that day. That alone brought back memories for all who came to pay their respects. And Pete was a family man from the word go. He came from a large family and he treated everyone like family whether you were related or not. And that's why I need to get that West Concord Hall of Fame going because Peter would be among the first inductees. This particular picture is a stock picture and not of the exact one Pete owned.



On the very day of Pete's visitation, we lost another West Concord community leader on August 14th when Darrel Faulkner died in an accident in Mantorville. I knew Darrel all my life. He and Karen were the best of friends with my parents and siblings. I probably remember him at first as a bus driver. You all know my dad was a driver for many years. Other bus drivers of that era included Howard Matti, Haven Zeller, Louis Leach, Marshall Svec, Armand Kautz. Then there came along this kid named Darrel who hung out with these old guys. He quickly fit in and eventually became an old guy himself. Darrel drove school bus for 36 years. Karen later became a bus driver too.

Keep scrolling down.

This picture of the bus drivers was from the 1968 West Concord High School yearbook.



Darrel worked part time for the USDA NRCS office. His main job was to go around and measure grain bins and make sure that if we had a loan on stored corn or soybeans, or what we used to call seal the crop, that it was indeed in the bin and was holding the number of bushels that the loan was for. I think he probably had made a visit to every farm in Dodge County.

I was a Concord township officer from 1980 to 1990. Darrel was on the board those 10 years I served. In fact, he served for 23 years. One of the memories I have of Darrel was township related. He, Fred O'Brien and I went to Washington D.C. for the National Towns and Township Association convention. This was in the early 1980's. Among the events we took in was a speech by President Reagan to our group. My memory was a different day when we had some free time to do some touring. So I walk into the hotel room where Darrel and Fred were and all I could do was stare at Darrel. He was wearing the brightest red dress pants I had ever seen. Now I was not a conservative dresser as my socks were all sorts of colors. In fact when I got married in Norway I wore a powder blue tuxedo which in Norway was unheard of. But these particular red pants were shocking even to me. I asked him if he was allowed to wear them in public and he assured me he was. Cars and taxis stopped even if we crossed the street against the light because all they could see was red.

Another memory I have is the October day in 1973 when a tornado struck the Dean Hindal farm and did some damage to buildings. The next day, October 10th, a number of neighbors were there to help clean up. We had been busy working when Darrel showed up and told us that Spiro T. Agnew had resigned as Vice President of the United States. This was an event I guess that stood out and one that I always remembered. Darrel, like Pete Boe, was a very kind and

gentle person. And at times a flashy dresser. He was a very caring person who loved his family and his friends dearly. He'll be missed. And while Pete's Jeep was parked outside the funeral home, Darrel's John Deere 3020 was parked out there during his visitation. A fitting tribute for a man who spent his life in agriculture. Again if West Concord had a Hall of Fame, or should I say when, I would nominate Darrel for the West Concord Hall of Fame.

This picture below is of Darrel's tractor the day it was parked outside the funeral home.

