



Dec 1, 2018

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Leo Rieken Speaks about his business

Leo Rieken, spoke on Saturday, December 1 to the Treynor Optimist Club about Rieken Construction. His father, Tom, started the business in the early 50's. He had come from NE, working as a farmhand in the area, and then had an opportunity to farm with Harry Paul, Henderson. They were needing some dirt work done and had trouble finding help so bought a dozer. Tom Rieken then had a heart attack in 'the mid-50's, quit farming, moved into Henderson, bought Harry's share of the dozer and started Rieken Construction. Leo was toddler at the time but there are memories of him being on dozers when he was as young as 2.



Leo Rieken

His first memory was at the age of 12, working on the street north of the bank. Driving the dozer himself, he was trying to avoid hitting Roy Larison, who liked to watch, and ended up backing over a fire hydrant.

He shared many familiar Treynor names that he did work for which were fun to remember: Richard Vorthmann, Detlef Gutttau, George Schneider, Wayne Klahn, the Gronstals, Henry Vorthmann, Al Strohhahn, Fern Eitmann, Benny Schnoor, Bob Chambers and more.

Leo married Donna in 1975 and has three daughters and 8 grandchildren. In 2010 they moved to west of Treynor, but the business is located in Henderson. Donna works in the business and recently retired from TS Bank. They have one hired man who has worked for them for 23 years. In 1979 he and his dad incorporated the business, which he stated was the best advice he received.

He shared many stories about projects he worked on in the area. He said his hired man likes doing the terraces and Leo enjoys new challenges, such as pulling a tree out of Keg Creek, taking down an 80 ft silo made of cement. John Klein shared a piece of trivia that there are 7000 miles of terraces in Pott. Co.

Leo also shared dynamite stories – usually one stick at a time is used, but one local farmer who was frustrated that the beavers came back, set off 17 sticks at once himself and blew up the whole dam system!

A heart-warming story was shared by Kirk Vorthmann, whose grandmother was a sister to Leo's dad. Rieka and Tom had grown up in a sod house in the Sandhills. Tom broke his arm. The doctor said he couldn't do anything about it and that he would probably die. There were gypsies camping near the creek. The grandmother gypsie said to bring him down there. She set the arm and said to have the dog lick it every day till it heals. It healed, although he couldn't straighten it all his life.

Meeting Minutes

President Dale Willenborg called the meeting to order. Sixteen members were present plus three guests, Leo Rieken, speaker, Donna Rieken, Jadee Burhenne. Kirk Vorthmann shared a joke followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Dale Willenborg gave the opening prayer.

Leo Rieken won the 50/50 award and Ward Chambers won the attendance drawing but was not present.

For bragging rights, Kevin and Marsha Underwood contributed for Bailey White being in the sports preview and names to first team all-city in volleyball player. Gary Gutttau contributed in honor of George W. Bush's life and 1000 points of light and also for the reminder of reading Delores Schnoor's obituary that her parents commenting that they had 17 grand children and one daughter in school.

Community News: John Klein announced that Paige Volkens has become the Conservation Education Coordinator for East and West Pott Co. He also encouraged the public to contact the school board in support of Paige's efforts to start an FFA department in the Treynor School.

Under old business, it was reported that dues are due. Gary Funkhouser reminded everyone of the Griswold Optimist Christmas Party and Auction on Dec. 8 at 6 PM. To RSVP, call Kathy Rush, 712-767-2344 or email jkabrush@netins.net.

Can Kennel workers were recognized: Chad and Gary Gutttau and John Klein.

Under new business, Dale indicated he would get more information out to the group about the upcoming Zone meeting in December.

Jadee Burhenne was present to receive a can kennel check for \$341.50 for the dance team. She has danced for 2 years. She said the money goes for team competition and costumes. There are two competitions per year and the team practices 1-2 times per week. They are enjoying their nicer facilities in the old locker.



Dale Willenborg and Jadee Burhenne

It was discussed whether to hold a meeting on Dec. 29 and the decision was to hold a meeting and the group can always talk even if there isn't a speaker.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by stating the Optimists Pledge.

Calendar

- Nov 26-Dec 8 JOII Club Winter Clothing Drive (drop off school and bank)
- Nov 28 1:00 Can kennel sorting for Cub Scouts
- Dec 8 6 PM Griswold Optimist Christmas Party and auction RSVP Kathy Rush, 712-767-2344 or email jkabrush@netins.net

Birthdays

- Dec. 16 Kevin Underwood
- Dec. 23 Chuck Nielsen

Anniversaries

- Dec. 27 Gary and Dee Gutttau

Programs

- December Kirk Vorthmann
- January Judy Gutttau
- February Keith Denton
- March Gary Funkhouser

Speakers

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Dues/Donations/Flag Money: Mail to Optimist Club of Treynor, PO Box 354, Treynor, IA 51575