

My name is Len Vonasek. I live near East Grand Forks, Minnesota, and I am honored to be nominated for a position on the board of directors of MMCI.

I was born in 1952 and raised on a small grain farm near Tabor, MN., which is only about 15 miles away from the rural farm site where my wife, Gayle, of 42 years, and I built our home in 1977. My only time away from this area was during my military duty in the Army.

We raised our three children here and are very proud of all of them, and have four wonderful grandchildren ranging from 21 to 12 years old.

I was raised with four siblings, 2 brothers and 2 sisters, one sister older, the others younger; all of us were taught the meaning of hard work and the return for it. We were raised with MM tractors and implements, and at a very young age I could back up a trailer, or in this case, a manure spreader, with my dad's MM 445 that he bought new in 1957. This was our main chore tractor, and one of my brothers still has it today.

My collecting started in 1980 when I bought my first MM. It was a 1949 GTB that was pretty rough. I brought it home thinking that I needed a project to get my mind off business for a few hours at a time, so I went to work. The first winter I took it apart, rebuilt the engine, the brakes and the front end, put a new radiator on it and drove it for the summer to find all the leaks. The next winter I took it mostly apart again, sandblasted it, painted it, and put new tires on it. It looked good, and ran well; and I said that it was too much work, and that I would never do that again! Well, never is a long time, and I have never quit restoring in one-way or another. After a few dozen overhauls, and skinned knuckles, I have quit counting.

I am a true believer in involving our young people in our heritage: First, in thanking our Lord Jesus for all his gifts to us. After that, in knowing where we came from, and how our parents and grandparents worked to get us to where we are today.

I think the MMCI coloring contest, and scholarship programs, and other ways of mentoring our youth are very important to them, and also to us as a club, and to the healthy growth that we hope for.

I have more questions than answers, but if I can serve in a manner that is for the good of all, then I welcome the challenge. Thank you again for the nomination. To quote a member of MMCI: Old tractors collect the nicest people!

Len Vonasek