



# Squire Bus Retiring Honorably

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"Oh me, oh my . . . I think my clutch is starting to slip. My cotter pins are starting to fall. Maybe my fuel line has a hernia."

Hey, wait a minute. Busses can't talk!

"Most busses can't, but there are a few like me. I've been hauling Pennings athletes around for almost 10 years, and I've learned a few things over the years. Like I know how some people kind of snicker at me. I guess I stand out in a crowd. But I think the kids kinda like me. I'm sort of an institution around here.

"But I guess it's time for me to be retired, if you'll pardon the pun.

"It won't be so bad, really . . . I mean the way they're farming me out is kind of an honor. They're buying a new bus from the Ric Oudenhoven Memorial Fund. He was a great young fella . . . really a shame about his accidental death last year.

"Course that new bus will have lots of spit and polish chrome, but I had my good days, too.

"Memories? Yeah, I've got lots of memories.

"Back in '66, I think it was my first year here at Pennings . . . and let me tell you I was no fresh-off-the-assembly-line-model even then. We were coming back from Marinette and one of my rear tires couldn't take it any longer. He just blew out all over the place. We sat around awhile until a couple of farmers returning from the local pub showed Father De Groot and Father Frigo how to master a tire change in the dark near Abrams.

"See that crinkle in my behind? Can't remember if it was some woman driver or just Father Frigo slipping the clutch when he was backing up.

"I used to give Pennings all kinds of mechanical trouble before about '68, but I've been pretty good since then. Got overhauled, you know.

"Say, did you know I used to be a zippy yellow color at one time? That was before '70 or '71 when the Pennings students threw this green all over me. I looked pretty sharp for awhile, what with the white stripes and the 'Squires' painted on the side. But I guess even my paint is getting a little old now.

"See this old heater up front? Didn't do

much good if you were in the back, but I always kept Father Frigo and Father De Groot warm, 'cause they were the athletic directors, you know, as well as my regular drivers.

"See these 10 rows of seats? Yeah, I know there's one without a back, but you can't be perfect.

"You know, I could always tell if we won or lost. If we won, the kids were happy, poking around at my light bulbs and stuff. If we lost, it was quiet, just like on the way to a game.

"Last year, when we clinched the conference basketball championship at Fond du Lac, we had a couple of guests from your Press-Gazette place.

"The kids were happy on the way back . . . think they gave that Cliff Christl fella a pink belly or something.

"That was okay, but you know that other guy, the guy with the camera, John Roemer? Well . . . he was one of the few people who ever smoked on me. Athletes gotta live clean, right?

"All that stuff seems like a long time ago. Guess a bus that can't remember too well must be getting old, huh.

IT MAKES MY OL' CARBURETOR ACHE WHEN I THINK OF SOMEONE ELSE TAKING MY PLACE

HAROLD ELDER...

"Sure, my back tires are a little bald and my doors don't close and I've got a little rust, but that's not any worse than varicose veins, is it?

"I think the kids know their new bus will be here in a couple weeks. They've been a little rougher on me than normal.

"But what the heck. I'm getting retired anyway.

"I'm not going to scrap, though. Maybe somebody will convert me into a camper or something. That'd be nice, sitting out in the woods, listening to the birds and stuff.

"Hey, come here. I want to show you something before you leave. See that speedometer. Says I can do a hundred, right? Who are they kidding.

"Well, it was nice you stopped. If you're in the area again, stop by. I'll be here . . . a couple more weeks anyway . . . in my stall next to the school. That's my sign over there. Says 'faculty only'.

"Naw, it's not so bad getting retired. The worst part is that some other young whippersnapper will be wearing my 8238 license plate.

"Bye now . . . beep, beep."