



Peter G. Neilson

January 17, 1933 - December 17, 2007

Peter G. Neilson, 74, of Kenockee Township, died unexpectedly Monday, December 17, 2007 while on duty with the Kenockee Township Fire Department.

He was born January 17, 1933 in New York, New York the son of the late Wallace and Nancy Groome Neilson.

His marriage to Doris Wunsch of Tonawanda, New York was June 18, 1955 in Eggertsville, New York. The couple lived in Avoca since 1978. Peter and his wife Doris both graduated from Cornell University and were married in 1955. Peter received a BS in Agriculture as well as a ROTC commission in the US Army, beginning a career of 21 years of military service. The military years included being stationed at Redstone Arsenal Alabama in the late 1950s in the early years of the space race, during which time the two boys were born. Then came three years in Germany attached to a Redstone Missile unit, along with family travels. In the late 1960s they spent two years in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Central Africa where Peter was an advisor to the Congolese army for vehicle repair. Peter also spent one year in Korea as head of a maintenance company and one year in Viet Nam researching captured weaponry. The last military assignment brought them to Michigan where he worked in Research and Development on the M1/Abrams Tank. When Peter retired from the army in 1976 he worked for Massey Ferguson for several years and then continued as a consultant in product safety and liability for the farm machinery industry at which time they moved to a farm in Avoca.

Peter joined the Kenockee Township Fire Department in 1982 and served 25 years including 7 as chief.

Peter enjoyed collecting military, fire safety and farm equipment models, and was restoring some full-sized military vehicles. He had an extensive collection of military insignia patches which have been on display occasionally at the US Army National Guard Hall in Port Huron. He also acquired a collection of African Art during his travels in the Congo.

He is survived by Doris, his wife of 52 years; two sons and daughter-in-law, John Peter Neilson of New York City and Richard Wallace Neilson and wife Elizabeth Neilson of Lebanon Indiana; brother and two sisters-in-law, Howard and Shirley Neilson of Colleyville, Texas, Patricia Neilson of Port St Lucie Florida .

He is preceded in death by his sister Jane Neilson of New Windsor Maryland and his brother Wallace Neilson of Port St. Lucie Florida.

His family honors the memory of Peter and invite you to visit and share Friday 2:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Kaatz Funeral Directors, Yale, and attend funeral services 11:00 a.m. Saturday with 10:00 a.m. visiting. Pastor Lisa Clark, associate pastor of Zion Methodist Church, Capac will officiate. Burial will be in Great Lakes National Cemetery in Holly Michigan.

Memorials are suggested to Kenockee Township Fire Department.

For information and Guest Book

kaatzfunerals.com

Previous Events

Service

DEC **22**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Kaatz Funeral Directors - Yale
10 S. Main Street
Yale, MI

Tribute Wall



“ *My thoughts and prayers are with you at this time. I always enjoyed coming to your house when we were planning trips - I loved Pete's sense of humor. He always had a twinkle in his eye and he always made me laugh.*

Velma##imported-begin##Velma Weston##imported-end##

January 02, 2008 at 10:58 AM



“ *Pete was a wonderful man and I will miss him. Doris, God is with you.##imported-begin##Toni Wunsch##imported-end##*

December 22, 2007 at 03:44 PM



“ *I had the privilege of getting to know Pete from my years of work at K's Diner. We always loved when he would come in and tell his stories and jokes. He was always a joy to be around and I feel very honored to have known him. He lived a great and full life and will be missed.##imported-begin##Jessie Smith##imported-end##*

December 21, 2007 at 03:12 PM



“ *Our deepest sympathy to you and your family.##imported-begin##Ann and Bob Fackler##imported-end##*

December 21, 2007 at 09:59 AM



“ My deepest sympathies go out to the family and friends of Pete. I've always respected him as a fellow fire fighter, officer and citizen. Pete exemplifies what it means to be a volunteer. He will be very sadly missed in the community, and especially the fire service.###imported-begin###Bruce Collick (CTFD)###imported-end##

December 20, 2007 at 02:12 PM



“ I will always have fond memories of "chief". I've known and respected him for approximately 13 years. St. Clair County has lost a wonderful citizen, a professional in all aspects, and a true leader. Many are unaware of the contributions Pete made to the fire service and the hazardous materials response in the county. It's comforting to know he will be watching from above. My sincere condolences to Kenockee Fire Department and the Neilson family. May God bless all of you. - Lee Bennett, Richmond, VA (formerly of Port Huron Township).###imported-begin###Lee Bennett###imported-end##

December 20, 2007 at 11:35 AM



“ Peter was my "Gentle Giant" Uncle. He always made me laugh. Although I didn't see him often, when I did it was as if we were always together. He has always kept me a part of the Neilson family. I will miss him. My heart is with you Doris, John and Rick.###imported-begin###Nancy Mougalian###imported-end##

December 20, 2007 at 10:56 AM



“ *Uncle Peter was a giant among men. His service to God, family and country were unmatched. He traveled the world in defense of our great nation. He and Aunt Doris proudly raised two sons. In his retirement, he served and protected his community as a volunteer firefighter. You will be missed by all who were touched by your kindness. May God protect and comfort Aunt Doris, John, and Rick during this time of great loss.*

Michael and Sandy Neilson##imported-begin##Michael and Sandy Neilson##imported-end##

December 20, 2007 at 10:11 AM



“ *Like Jim, I have my own fond memories of Uncle Pete. I adored his sense of humor and appreciated so much his commitment to family. May the light that faded here, become a bright star in the heavens. Peace be with Aunt Doris, Rick and John.##imported-begin##Vicki Neilson##imported-end##*

December 20, 2007 at 09:30 AM



“ *sending condolences##imported-begin##David Murphy##imported-end##*

December 20, 2007 at 08:54 AM



“ We were still in our teens when my high school friend, Doris, began dating Pete while we were all students at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. I'm so saddened by this loss. May you gain peace believing that Pete is now healed in Heaven. No more pain. May God bless all of the Wunsch and Neilson families, and their friends. Warm hugs from Florida, Barb Purtee##imported-begin##Barbara Purtee##imported-end##

December 20, 2007 at 08:48 AM



“ I always looked up to Pete, literally and figuratively. He was an impressive man who led an interesting life. One of my favorite memories was the trip we took with Kevin about 10 years ago and his passion for showing off the tractor collection. Prayers and thoughts are with you.

Jim##imported-begin##Jim Neilson##imported-end##

December 20, 2007 at 08:30 AM



“ Pete was a fine gentleman, he was a friendly man, and showed his respect to any person. I only knew Pete for a short time, I am sure that his fellow firefighters will miss his high quality leadership##imported-begin##Gerald Hellner##imported-end##

December 19, 2007 at 08:37 PM