

From the Sunday, September 21, 1997 edition of Kankakee Journal:

Vernon E. "Vern" Kerouac, 69, of Kankakee, died Saturday (Sept. 20, 1997) at Loyola Medical Center, after a short illness. Visitation will be from 4 p.m. Tuesday until 8 p.m. services at Hertz-Thoma Chapel, Kankakee. The Rev. Rae Kidder will officiate. Cremation rites will be accorded. Memorials may be made to the family. He was born Nov. 11, 1927, in Manteno, the son of Elmer and Leah Soucie Kerouac. Surviving are his wife, the former Joan Meisterling, whom he married Nov. 11, 1948, in Manteno; three sons and daughters-in-law, Thomas and Misty Kerouac, Dale and Laura Kerouac, all of Bourbonnais, Robert and Joady Kerouac of Bradley; two daughters and sons-in-law, Diane and Rob Holley of Peoria, Rita and Jeff Juckett of Bradley; three sisters and two brothers-in-law, Sister Mary Lucilla Kerouac of St. Mary's Hospital, Vicki and Ed Schultz of Herscher, Linda Lou and Robert Miller of Chicago; one brother-in-law, Charles Moody; one sister-in-law, Hazel Kerouac of Kankakee; 10 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Deceased are his parents, one brother and one sister. Mr. Kerouac drove a concrete truck for 40 years, retiring from Triangle Construction. He attended the Nazarene Church. He was a former member of the Knights of Columbus. He enjoyed garden tractors and construction work and was an avid collector of toy cement trucks.

From the Monday, July 1, 1991 edition of the Kankakee Journal (with photo of Vernon & Tom): Photo caption –

Vernon Kyrouac, left, and son Tom Kyrouac reminisce Sunday as they awaited the start of Bourbonnais' Grand Parade. Sunday marked the final time that both would drive cement trucks in the parade for Vernon is retiring soon as a driver for Triangle Construction Co. Tom will carry on the family tradition alone as a driver for Raspolich Material Co. Truck tradition not set in concrete by Jerry Morgan, Journal writer Bourbonnais' Grand Parade Sunday marked the end of an era for Vernon and Tom Kyrouac (sic). Vernon has been driving a cement truck for 41 years. Like father, like son, Tom has been driving one about 15 years. He drives for Raspolich Material Co. while dad Vernon drives for Triangle Construction Co. And both have been driving cement trucks in the parade for a dozen years. In 1987, Raspolich received a third place award in the parade's commercial division. Sunday, however, was different. It was the last time the two will appear together in the parade. Vernon is retiring to leave Tom to carry on the family tradition alone. "I want to hang it up," said Vernon Sunday as the two waited for the start of the parade. As he talked, he recalled how he had also worked with concrete besides hauling it. "Cement work is one of the toughest things to do," said Vernon. "You have to work it until it's finished. You don't take a break for lunch. You have to keep at it." As they talked, the spotless, red and orange Triangle cement truck sat gleaming under the relentless heat of the sun. Vernon also acknowledged that preparing the truck for the parade is a hard task. Son Tom agreed. A cement truck has a lot of knicks and crannies that take time to scrub out. At parade time, Vernon sat behind the wheel of the gaily decorated vehicle guiding the 25,000-pounder with son Tom in the passenger seat.