

2,000,000 NEVADA HIGHWAY MILES

"He was a good company man...and a good union man at the same time."

Perhaps no employer can pay a higher compliment these days, as Sebastian Mikulich, president of Las Vegas-Tonopah-Reno Stage Lines, did to veteran bus driver Herb Johnson of Las Vegas.

Johnson, who piloted LTR's buses over Nevada highways for close to 2 million miles over a period of 18 years, retired recently because of illness. Mikulich chose the Holiday Season to present him with an engraved watch to commemorate his years of faithful service to the company.

Johnson, who resides with his wife at 3308 Hickey in North Las Vegas, first went to work for LTR in 1954 and started out on the Tonopah to Winnemucca run. Before then, he had

chalked up close to a million-and-a-half accident-free miles as a bus driver in northern California.

About 17 years ago, Johnson moved to Las Vegas and became a regular driver on the Las Vegas to Reno circuit, and continuously drove about 9,000 miles per month on that run.

Johnson, who recalls the days "when a bus driver and a policeman received a lot more respect than they do now," was the type of driver who earned that respect.

Regular passengers on LTR would delay their trip if they knew Johnson had the day off, and new customers often would shake his hand and compliment him at the end of a run.

Asked to describe the perfect bus driver, Johnson said: "You've got to forget yourself and think of that load of



SEBASTIAN MIKULICH, LEFT, PRESIDENT OF LAS VEGAS-TONOPAH-RENO STAGE LINES, PRESENTS AN INSCRIBED WATCH TO FORMER LTR DRIVER HERB JOHNSON, A VETERAN OF CLOSE TO TWO MILLION MILES OF DRIVING ON NEVADA HIGHWAYS.

passengers and the equipment that the company has entrusted to you. After all... they didn't come to me; I went to them looking for a job."

When Johnson first began driving for LTR, the line was using 1939-model motor coaches, which were the best available at the time. Later they converted to GMC air-ride buses and today LTR maintains a fleet of 100 giant super highway cruisers.

Though Johnson conceded that the buses of today have many more comfort features to offer, such as better seating, visibility, air conditioning and rest rooms, he said "I have as much respect for those old models as anything on the road today."

In those early days, a driver had to carry along a tool box and do much of his own maintenance, but even that was an advance over LTR's beginning years before, when the senior Mikulich recalled that the Las Vegas to Tonopah run took 16 hours and he also had to carry

along emergency food, as well as a shovel, an ax and wood for fires.

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For locals, John Grey, former pitcher with N. Y. Yankees, Phil. Athletics and Phillies and Cleveland Indians, will be at Flamingo Hotel over this weekend. Grey, also a golfer of note, is now travelling representative for American Agronomics.



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