

The Elevator Escalator Safety Foundation Loses a Dear Friend

June 18, 2007



Floyd J. “Bud” Rommel was one of the original board members of the Elevator Escalator Safety Foundation. He served on the Elevator Escalator Safety Council in the 1980’s, prior to the Foundation being established, as well. Bud

passed away May 2, 2007 in his hometown of Phoenix, Arizona with his wife by his side, Beverly.

While serving on the Elevator Escalator Safety Council in 1989, Bud assisted in developing the Safe-T Rider program. He carried on his leadership being nominated to the Elevator Escalator Safety Foundation Board in 1991, when the EESF was first established. He served alongside four others within the industry on the Foundation’s Board. EESF’s board now contains 15 members and 14 alternates. We’ve come a long way. But none of what we have done would be possible without the guidance and help Bud graciously volunteered in the formative years.

Bud was very instrumental during the development stages of the Safe-T Rider program. In 1992, the Safe-T Rider program was piloted in five cities. Those cities were chosen by association with the four Founding Associations, of which the National Association of Elevator Safety Authorities was one. Bud Rommel was the Executive Director at the time. He was assigned 28 cities to get volunteers from within NAESA to help distribute the program.

When the Safe-T Rider program was being videoed, Bud attended the tapings and was EESF’s technical advisor. Thanks to Bud, there were minor changes that had to be made to the original taping. We still use the video to this day.

Ricia Hendrick (Elevator World) served beside Bud during his reign on the Board. She says, "Bud was utterly committed to the children's program - Safe-T-Rider and he was our on-set advisor for the entire filming process. Without Bud we wouldn't have a Safe-T-Rider program today. He would constantly stop parents and children on escalators to urge them to be safe even though they usually were rude to him. He would do anything to keep children safe - but he did say he would draw the line at wearing the costume."

Tim Duin (Retired, Montgomery KONE) also served on the Board with Bud. He says, "I remember Bud as being a calm, reserved person who always had some sage advice. He knew the membership of his NAESA group well and seemed to quietly represent and reflect their opinions. He had great ideas to improve safety and we would often especially discuss escalator safety since he was aware of the many escalators in the Phoenix area and the unique issues they presented. I will treasure my memories of my friendship with Bud."

William McLean (Retired, New York City Transit) says, "Bud was one of the most enjoyable men that I had come to meet and was pleasant to work with. I would like to mention that Bud was the one person that supported me when I wanted to back the installation of the Escalator Skirt Safety Brushes on the escalators in the U.S. He asked me to write the finding of the NYC Transit's experience with the brushes we had installed.

Bud had my report published and gained the attention of the code committee regarding the Transit's experience with the brushes keeping the riders away from the sides (Skirts) of the Escalators as they rode. This indicated that these brushes could reduce side entrapments on escalators. This prompted the code committee to take action and approve the installation as an option on escalators. This, I am sure, has saved a lot of injuries to the riding public and especially to children in preventing side entrapments."

Bud will be missed by many within the industry. The commitment Bud made to safety issues was beyond the call of duty. The Elevator Escalator Safety Foundation was fortunate to have a person of his caliber in the development stages and beyond of the Safe-T Rider program.

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"Educating the public on safe riding habits"

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