In 1938, Elwood Kobussen aka “Grandpa Goldie,” a dairy farmer and trucker by trade, was chosen by the Kaukauna Board of Education to transport out-of-town students to and from the Kaukauna High School. Kaukauna Bus Service Incorporated was born that year and started with red, white and blue buses.

The idea of busing children gained momentum and a second bus was purchased in 1940. One bus was added each year until the mid 1950s. James Kobussen, Elwood Kobussen’s eldest son, joined the company and they eventually formed a father-son partnership.

In 1958, former Kaukauna Mayor, Doty Bayorgeon, requested that an inter-city route be established between Kaukauna and Appleton. Kaukauna Bus Service was contracted to operate and manage the inter-city transit system until 1974 when it became Valley Transit. During this time, a deluxe school bus was purchased and operated for group charter trips.

The Kaukauna Bus Service was incorporated in 1965. Kobussen began to hire women drivers in the mid-1960s, a sensitive and progressive idea at the time for northeast Wisconsin companies. In 1967, the company began transporting students for the Neenah Joint School District. Michael Kobussen, Elwood’s youngest son, joined the firm to manage the Neenah operations. Since then Michael’s wife Ann, daughter Melissa and son Scott have joined the business.

In the early 1970s, the company started a driver’s training program, although it was not a requirement by the state of Wisconsin. To complete the program drivers were required to attend training and take road and written tests. During this time James Kobussen became a Certified Driver Training Instructor and taught classes at Fox Valley Technical College. This practice continues today with all Kobussen drivers receiving skid pad training at Fox Valley Technical College.

Kaukauna Bus Service became Kobussen Buses, Ltd. in 1976. In 1980, Outagamie County and Kobussen started a contract to transport adults with special needs. This contract has been expanded to 11 vehicles and still operates daily.

Kobussen expanded into motorcoaches in 1983 and offers charted group trips throughout the US and Canada. More recently Kobussen has become a member of Trailways — which gives access to Trailways members for the rare need to keep a group moving when a bus or driver cannot continue.

In 1995, Kobussen was nominated by the Wisconsin Council of Safety and Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations (DIL-HR) for the Wisconsin Corporate Safety Award based on compensation claim scores. Kobussen is the only bus company in NE Wisconsin nominated for this honor.

In 1994, James’s youngest son, Dan Kobussen, joined the company. In 1998, James retired from Kobussen and his presidency went to his middle child, Joe Kobussen.

Over the years Kobussen has opened offices in Oshkosh, Oconto, Sun Prairie, Bloomer and Orfordville. Kobussen continues its commitment to safety, receiving the highest safety certification from the Department of Transportation and the Department of Defense. Kobussen stays on the cutting edge of technology with updates from local and national association membership. Global positioning systems, student routing systems and diesel fired pre-heaters are just some of the items that make up Kobussen’s safe eco-efficient efforts.

In 2011, Kobussen added a new fixed route service, called “Home Run,” that is dedicated to transporting students between Green Bay, Appleton, Oshkosh and Madison. The system operates on Fridays and Sundays allowing students to get home for the weekend or visit their friends at other universities.

Today Kobussen has over 650 dedicated team members who operate and maintain a fleet of Luxury Motorcoaches, School Buses and special needs equipped Transit vehicles from seven locations. Kobussen is committed to growing into the future with all the friendly drivers treating the folks they transport just like one of the family.

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Family Pride in Every Ride