

Harvey Paulson, 90, farmer, legislator from Sleepy Eye

By Maureen M. Smith
Staff Writer

thought people should have a stronger voice."

Harvey Paulson, 90, a former farmer and conservative state legislator known for his work on agricultural issues, died Friday at his home in Sleepy Eye, Minn.

In 1961, he said that he would not run for reelection because his seat representing Brown and Redwood counties was being eliminated by a reapportionment act. He said that if he returned to St. Paul, he would work for a change in Minnesota's tax on oleomargarine.

Paulson was raised on a farm near Sleepy Eye. He started his own farm and worked on community farming issues. He was a longtime leader of the local 4-H club, member of the township board and soil conservation board.

"When I began farming, all my neighbors here ... had dairy cows, and there was some reason to protect butter," he said. "But now only one farmer in 25 around here has a herd, and they all grow soybeans. Who are we kidding?"

"When I grew up on the farm, we had everything — pigs, chickens and cows, not just grain," said his daughter, Janet Poirier, of Sleepy Eye. "He always served on boards. He always wanted to make things better."

After he left the Legislature, he returned frequently to St. Paul to visit. "He was interested in politics years after he finished at the Capitol," said his son-in-law, Gene Poirier. "He would go visit with the politicians that he knew and he'd listen to some of the bills."

Described once as a "solid, conservative dirt farmer with a long record of community activity," he served as a state representative for several terms in the late 1950s and early 1960s before returning to Sleepy Eye to farm.

He is also survived by his wife, Erna Paulson, and daughter, June Kallevig, of Springfield, Minn. Visitation will be at 4 p.m. Sunday at the O'Hare-Sturm Funeral Home in Sleepy Eye, with services at 10:30 a.m. Monday at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Evan, Minn.

"He was conservative but yet he was very progressive and broad-minded in his thinking," Poirier said. "He always hoped that people would be more in control than government. He