

# THE LINE STOPPER

NEWS ABOUT MUELLER CO. EMPLOYEES AND THEIR FAMILIES

OCTOBER 1987

## Plant Manager's Corner

About a year ago, during one of our employee meetings, we reviewed the approved 1987 Capital Budget. Since then several employees have asked what has actually been done. I was surprised by the question. I assumed that everyone was aware of the new and rebuilt equipment being brought into the plant, and I just thought that everyone would know we are on track with our plans. Not a good assumption.

So let's review the major 1987 capital projects which have, or will be completed by the end of this year.

- Rebuild two Gorton Mills in Department 80-B
- Add two Squeezers for the Brass Foundry
- Purchase a CNC Horizontal Turning Center for Department 70
- Install a Barfeed for our Mazak machine in Department 70
- Rebuild two Goss-DeLeeuw machines in Department 80-B
- Rebuild two Automatic Assembly machines in Department 80-A
- Rebuild two sets of Luboseal Test Tanks in Department 80-A
- Rebuild one 365 New Britain Gridley machine in Department 80-B
- Rebuild a Fitter in Department 80-A
- Install a compressed Air Dryer in the Foundry
- Purchase a Laempe Cold Box Core machine for the Foundry
- Purchase a used Natco Drill Press for Department 70
- Install new lighting in the Foundry
- Install Light Controllers for the office (saves energy)

- Install a new Dust Collector for the Brass and Iron Foundry
- Purchase a used Semi-Tractor to haul castings from the Foundry to the Machine Shop
- Rebuild our Iron Reamer in Department 80-B
- Rebuild our Imp Lathe in Department 80-B
- Replace ductwork in the Plating Department
- Purchase a used Greenlee to add capacity for export orders in Department 70
- Purchase a Man Lift for Maintenance in the Factory
- Purchase Tooling and Patterns to support new product introductions

I think everyone will agree that this is a very impressive list and that our 1987 Capital Program spells progress for our plant. Progress which helps maintain our competitive position in the markets where we compete.

We are currently finalizing our 1988 Capital Budget. Every indication is that it will be as aggressive as our 1987 program. There will, however, be less emphasis on merely rebuilding existing equipment as we have taken care of most of our major needs in this area. Rather, the emphasis will be on cost saving projects which will significantly lower our operating costs and assist in our efforts to maintain our profit margins in markets which allow for little or no price increases.

This kind of activity, by the way, is going on all over the country by those firms that are doing what has to be done to stay in business long term. I'm happy and proud to tell you we are one of those firms.

## Safe Extension Cord Use Decreases Home Hazards

Inaccessibility of electrical outlets often leads to the use of extension cords. But if certain safety guidelines are not followed, extension cords could become serious hazards.

Special attention should be given to home use of extension cords. To be considered for use, a cord should bear the Underwriters' Laboratories (UL) label or that of another acceptable testing lab. The label indicates that the cord has met certain recognized safety standards, and the factory where it was manufactured has passed various tests and inspections.

As with all electrical cords, extension cords should be inspected for loose connections, gouges or cracks in the insulation which expose the wires. The cords should be discarded if these defects are present.

The danger of overloading a cord is especially common in a home environment, since high-wattage devices are in frequent use. Always choose the right cord for the job. If the items to be powered are high wattage, make certain that the cord was made to withstand such power. Overloading an extension cord can lead to the buildup of heat and the breakdown of the cord's insulation. Both these hazards can result in fire.

For outdoor use, use only cords marked "For Outdoor Use".

After plugging an extension cord into the wall, and plugging additional cords into the extension cord, see that the prongs have been inserted all the way into the outlet. Plugs can overheat as a result of poor prong contact, and exposed prongs present the danger of accidental shock.

When in use, extension cords should not be wound or tied up, nor should carpets or rugs be placed over them. These mistakes also can lead to the buildup of heat. Home traffic is sometimes heavy, so it is essential that extension cords be placed out of the way. Stepping on cords can weaken their insulation, and the cords themselves can cause someone to trip or fall.

Do not allow furniture to rest upon an extension cord. The weight of it can damage the cord and create a fire hazard.

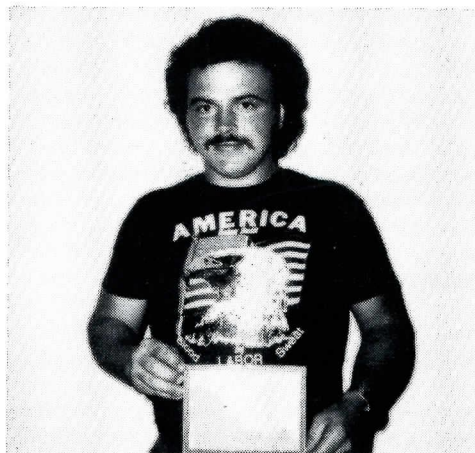
Never use staples or nails to secure extension cords because their points can penetrate the wire. The person doing the nailing or stapling might then get shocked, and the damaged wire would be a fire hazard.

And remember, an extension cord should be used only as a temporary solution to the problem of too many plugs and not enough outlets.

## New Wise Owl Club Member

Dick Backstein recently received membership into the Wise Owl Club. The Wise Owl Club is sponsored by the National Society to Prevent Blindness and to get membership an individual must have prevented a serious eye injury by wearing eye protection.

Dick gained membership when the safety glasses he was wearing prevented hot plastic he was working with from splashing into his eyes. The Company congratulates Dick on his new membership and commends him for being diligent in wearing his eye protection.



Dick Backstein



## Service Awards

AUGUST & SEPTEMBER

### 5 YEARS

Robert Curtis

### 10 YEARS

David Boomer  
Jerry Bennett  
Jimmie Adams  
Stan Patterson  
Pam Lewis

### 15 YEARS

Cliff Faber  
Orville Ryder  
John Payton

### 20 YEARS

Charles Morey  
Jack Phillips  
Robert W. Taylor  
Jerry West  
Freddie Young

### 25 YEARS

John Rohman  
(no picture)



Mike Thomas  
25 years



Gary Brunner  
25 years



Bennett Wilkins  
25 years



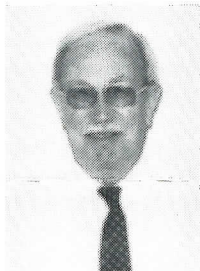
Glen Beiber  
25 years



Bill Henneman  
25 years



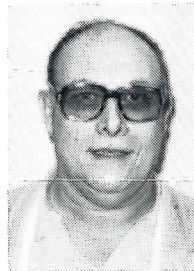
Walt Morganthaler  
25 years



Stan Metz  
25 years



Walt Jenkins  
30 years



Don Rauch  
35 years



Dean Ater  
35 years

## Track Meet

Mueller Co. is invited to participate in the ADM Corporate Cup Track Meet on Saturday, October 10, 1987 at ADM/Lakeview, 1001 Brush College Road, Decatur, Illinois.

A number of various events will be offered for the employees and/or their spouses to participate in. Some of the events include Masters 2 mile relay, pyramid relay, sprint relay (440 - 220 - 110 - 330 - 220 - 440), executive 2 mile relay, women's mile medley relay, co-ed relay, 2 mile team run, men's mile run (age divisions), and special invitational mile.

Employees and/or their spouses may participate on more than one team or individual event.

Awards will be awarded to winners in each event and participation ribbons will be awarded to everyone who does not place in the top three in each event.

Any people who would like to help in the actual running of the meet, please contact the Mueller Co. Personnel Office for details.

It promises to be a fun meet with an opportunity for friendly competition.

## Insurance Reminder

Please remember to use your Plan Code Number from your Insurance I.D. Card in the right hand corner of each insurance form sent to Champaign. (30,000- ) This code tells the computer service which set of benefits you have and speeds the service considerably.

The new Illinois Toll-free telephone number to check on claims is 1-800-634-3506.

## Health Tip

### Eat Your Oatmeal!

Oatmeal may lower your blood cholesterol according to a recent study reported in "The Journal of the American Dietetic Association". The amounts of oat fiber (water soluble type) found in 2 cups of oatmeal or 2 oat bran muffins reduced the blood cholesterol of subjects already on a reduced fat cholesterol diet. Wheat bran and other forms of insoluble fiber do not produce measurable cholesterol changes. This study further illustrates the importance of eating a variety of fibrous foods.

## Employees Assistance Program Makes Changes

The Mueller Co. Employees Assistance Program would like to take this opportunity to review a few changes that have occurred in the program.

Linda Stennett-Brewer, who's been with the EAP for the past three years, was recruited by the Carle Hospital in Champaign to manage their program. The EAP is going to miss Linda and the contributions she's made to this department, companies, and community at-large.

In replacing Linda, we have been able to recruit Rita Chaney. Rita has an M.S. degree in Clinical Psychology from Illinois State University. She has five years in clinical background in a variety of marital/family, chemical dependency and mental health related services. Rita has

lived in the Decatur area for the last fifteen years. Her background, training and skills will be a definite asset to the growth and development of the Employee Assistance Program.

In addition to these changes, the Employee Service Center at St. Mary's Hospital has established a satellite program at St. John's Hospital in Springfield. This has meant the addition of another EAP counselor, Jeanne Hamilton. Jeanne has a B.S. degree in Psychology and is working towards her Masters Degree at Sangamon State University. She has been working in the employee assistance field for four years with Sangamon-Menard Treatment Center in Springfield. She brings a wealth of experience and background training that can only benefit employees and their families. Although she is primarily located in Springfield, there will be some time for her availability in the Decatur area.

If you would like to set up an appointment with Rita Chaney, Jeanne Hamilton or Kevin McAvoy, please feel free to contact your Employee Assistance Program at 429-2339. Remember, day or evening hours are available for appointments.

## Wedding Bells

Charles Lee Snoko and Norma J. Trulock said their vows on September 19, 1987. Lee is an Assistant Induction Furnace Operator in the Iron Foundry. We would all like to wish Lee and Norma the very best and congratulations from all of us.

## Coming Events

Downtown Annual Art Fair - Decatur -  
October 2-4

Pumpkinfest - Decatur Civic Center -  
October 2-4

Candelight Tour of New Salem, Illinois -  
October 10

Ethnic Fest for All - Peoria Civic Center -  
October 31 - November 1

Bluegrass Festival - Jacksonville, Illinois -  
November 6-8



# MRO Service Through Communication

The MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Operating Supplies) Department was established at Mueller Co. in January, 1986. Its primary functions are to procure tools and supplies for use in plant operations and to reduce operating expenses. As one can see, these goals are sometimes conflicting in real practice and very close attention must be paid when each supply item is purchased in order to balance them effectively.

During fiscal 1986, Mueller Co. MRO expenses for factory/foundry were reduced by nearly eight percent (8%). This was accomplished through such methods as closer monitoring of all purchase requisitions, daily/weekly tracking of MRO expenses, supplies consolidation (construction of the MRO Supply Crib), and competitive bidding programs initiated by the Purchasing Department. This trend has continued throughout 1987 year-to-date. During this time, customer service levels have risen to above ninety-five percent (95%), meaning that Mueller Co. is delivering products to its customers **on time** more than 95% of the time (a Mueller record). These statistics indicate that MRO's two primary goals have been achieved.

Now that the administrative methods of procuring tools and reducing expenses have been initiated and refined to a degree, it becomes much more difficult to improve performance. The MRO Department needs the help of every Mueller employee associated with production related tools/supplies. The toolmakers, machine operators, and shop foremen can play an especially significant role in reducing costs by communicating with the MRO Department concerning **any** tooling problems.

We began opening lines of communication with the advent of the "Broken Tool Report". This report, issued weekly, identifies where tools are being broken and the subsequent cost to Mueller Co. It does not attempt to identify **why** tool are broken, instead, it serves as a "red flag" in identifying problem areas. The "broken tool display case" which exhibits broken tools and related costs provides information to employees each time they are issued a tool at the MRO crib window.

## Planning For Retirement Workshop Offered

If you were asked — "How do you see your retirement?", most of us would have thoughts of not having the daily drudgery of going to work; or, being able to play most of the day (e.g. golf, bowling, gardening, hobbies, etc.); or, just relaxing throughout the day. Yet there is more to retirement than just enjoying our favorite activities — we need to plan for our retirement.

Planning for a **successful retirement** is one of the most critical issues facing pre-retirees. Their success at retirement hinges on awareness of fitness, nutrition, home safety and security, social/psychological adjustment, community resources, SSI and Medicare, and legal and financial plans. The better prepared they are for the transition from a work-structures lifestyle to a retired lifestyle, the happier and more satisfied their retirement. This is why we have designed a Pre-Retirement Workshop to assist those employees with their retirement planning.

In July, 1987 the MRO Department (Tool Room & Tool Crib) began holding monthly communication meetings. The meetings have served as a forum for employees to communicate with the MRO Manager and has also enabled all employees to discuss both departments and plant objectives. Two departmental meetings have been held so far. The meetings have been very successful...several problems have been identified and solved. In addition, the meetings have generated several good ideas concerning tooling improvements.

Communication meetings are also being held with the employees who are being affected

## AIW Hall Has Busy Labor Day

The A.I.W. Hall, 2882 N. Dineen, was a busy place on Sunday, September 6, and Monday (Labor Day), September 7, 1987. It was a place for Labor to celebrate their holiday, and it was the local area Pledge Center for the Muscular Dystrophy Telethon.

## Newest National Park

The Great Basin National Park was recently dedicated as the newest national park. It is an 77,109 acre isolated expanse located near Baker, Nevada on U.S. 50, known as "the loneliest road in America."

The first new national park in 15 years in the 48 contiguous states includes 13,063 foot Wheeler Peak and other stunning mountains towering above sagebrush - studded desert, alpine lakes, deep limestone caves, and groves of gnarled bristlecone pine, the oldest living tree.

Former Senator Alan Bible described the area as "marvelously scenic" and "somewhat unbelievable in its arid setting". Governor Dick Bryan stated "at last I believe we are fulfilling our initial promise to visitors - that Nevada is gaming and so much more".

The park was a result of a compromise that allowed for preservation while protecting interests of miners and ranchers in the region.

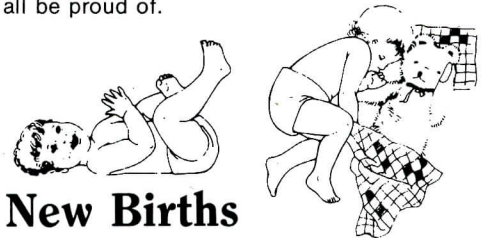
by the "Tool Pull-In Project". The MRO Manager is meeting with employees before the tool pull-in begins to explain what we plan to do and give employees an opportunity to make suggestions. Follow up meetings are also being held to identify and resolve problems caused by the project. By communicating in this way we have been able to proceed smoothly on the project, which was originally perceived by many as being "too big to tackle".

The goal of the MRO department is to provide better tool coverage while reducing overall tooling costs. This will reduce delays and increase operating efficiency. These goals will be realized through joint effort of all of us...and communication will help assure that we are headed in the right direction.

Outside activities included a horseshoe tournament, children's games, novelty booths, food, and refreshments. Inside activities started at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 6. Several area bands donated their time to play for Muscular Dystrophy. There was a two dollar cover charge at the door with all of the proceeds being donated to Muscular Dystrophy.

Monday's activities started at Noon and ran until 5:00 p.m. There were several groups providing entertainment throughout the day. They included vocal groups, Karate demonstrations, and an auction of donated items. Several equipment items donated by the St. Louis Cardinals brought a total of \$1662.50 at the auction.

WCIA built a set and broadcast live when there was a break to local stations during the nationally broadcast Muscular Dystrophy Telethon. The telephone Pledge Center raised approximately \$13,000. A combination of all of the other activities brought in \$6,000. This made a total of \$19,000 for the Decatur area Pledge Center. It was a fine effort and one which we can all be proud of.



## New Births

Jackson Tyler, born July 24, is the son of Mark and Shelly Mathias. Mark is employed in the Ground Key Division as a Machine Operator — Key Turning, Fitting and Body Operator. Jackson was welcomed home by a sister, Jennifer Lynn.

Christopher Michael, born September 4, is the son of Tom and Tricia Adkins. Tom is employed in the Brass Foundry as a Brass Molder. James Adkins, Tom's brother is also employed in the Brass Foundry as a Brass Molder.

Keenan Marquez, born August 29, is the son of Jimmie and Betty Adams. Jimmie is employed in the Ground Key Division as a Key Machine Operator.

Zebelin Curtis, born September 8, is the son of Curtis and Dallas Beasley. Curtis is employed in the Ground Key Division as a Semi Automatic Goss Operator. Zebelin was welcomed home by sister Gele.





## Can You Identify Anyone?

This photo was turned in to "The Line Stopper" by Mr. Don Ferry (grandson of Bill Ferry) of Coral Springs, Florida for some identification of the employees. The photo was taken around 1936 at the Mueller Ohka Hunting Lodge. Identified are Bill Ferry, far left, and Frank Mueller, with the cane. If you are able to identify anyone else in the photo, please call Dodie in the Personnel Office.

**Mueller Co.**

DECATUR, IL 62525

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