

1987

# THE LINE STOPPER

NEWS ABOUT MUELLER CO. EMPLOYEES AND THEIR FAMILIES

## Plant Manager's Corner

I would like to address a sensitive topic. That being the movement of work in and out of the Decatur plant. I have heard many comments in the recent past on this subject — most of them negative. I would like to address the more positive aspect of the issue. The movement of work into the Decatur plant.

But first, allow me to present a little background. If we produce a product at a significantly higher cost than our competitors, for any reason, and we fail to remedy the situation, well, it doesn't take an economist to figure out what the ultimate result will be. We will get squeezed out and lose both business and jobs.

So what can we do? One thing we can do is to take advantage of the same forces in the economy that are giving us problems with our prices and "shop" for the best deal we can find for the goods and services we need. Believe me we are doing that for everything — and it is paying off.

That's all fine and everyone will agree until work that was done in Decatur is moved elsewhere. Then it becomes very "sensitive". I understand that. If someone came up with an idea on how to "farm out" plant manager work I'd get nervous very fast, because it's my job. I would probably come up with a lot of good reasons why it was a bad idea.

Back to the point, we are looking at and evaluating everything. But things do go both ways and many times we find that some work is best done in Decatur. This finally brings me to the point of this article. We are not only looking at moving work out, we are also looking at work that can be best done at Decatur. This review process is constantly going on and it has succeeded in bringing back a number of jobs because it was the best thing for the company and in the final analysis the best thing for all of us. Let me cite a few Decatur success stories.

In the past few months we have begun to cast some nuts and washers which were previously purchased from Sloan Foundry. Why? Because our foundry is the least cost producer for the parts in question. Also, some of the brass castings transferred to Albertville several years ago have been moved back to our Brass Foundry

again because we are the best at producing these parts.

We are constantly seeking jobs to quote on for other plants within Mueller. Sometimes we win and get an order. The Mueller Pump plant in Conway, Arkansas is now buying two high volume parts from us. We are now making more seat rings for Chattanooga and have just added Mueller Canada to our list as a seat ring customer. The seat rings for Chattanooga, by the way, are being machined on Mori-Seiki's in Department 80. Again, the reason is that our cost was the lowest.

The brass brought back from these projects in the last few months total about 1.6 million pounds, or the equivalent of twenty-four days' work in our Brass Foundry.

I like that. I'm proud of it, and want to do more. But we have to earn it, and we will because we are good, and getting better. There are a number of projects now being reviewed which could bring additional work back into Decatur. I believe we have a good chance of being the low cost producer. Time will tell, but I'm optimistic.

On the other hand, when someone can beat us, for whatever reason, we will take advantage of it and look for something we can do to take its' place. This process makes us stronger. I hope you understand a little better why we "farm things out", and take some pride and comfort in the fact that we also "farm things back".

## Turn Those Ideas Into Cash

During the course of a week, all of us come up with ideas on how to save either time or money. Some people keep their ideas to themselves; while others share their ideas and also turn them into cash. Ideas that reduce operating costs are critical to our plant because they help make our plant more competitive. Employees who work for our competition do much the same — they help reduce costs. Recently, eleven employees were recognized for their contribution to improve our competitive edge and change the way we operate. They are: Bennett Wilkins, Roger Turner, Charles Spence, Charles Kingery, Jerry Bennett, Leslie Lindsay, James Hackert, Cecil Baker, Ronald McDermith, Gary Wright, Glenn Kussart.

Bennett Wilkins and Roger Turner shared a \$2545.72 award. Other awards ranged from \$25.00 to \$389.20. It takes a special kind of person to follow through with their ideas, despite those around them who may scoff at the possibilities. To be receptive to a new idea is the future of this plant and we invite all of you to

## CEO Ed Powers Speaks At Mueller Management Club

Ed Powers, Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Mueller Holdings Corporation, Annapolis, Maryland, addressed the Mueller Management Club on Wednesday, May 13, 1987.

Mr. Powers complimented both hourly and salaried employees working in the Decatur Plant for the job they have done the past two years to turn the plant around and make it a viable plant again.

He told the group that the job being done in the plant to reduce scrap, increase productivity and reduce overall costs had made the difference for the plant.

"Three years ago, I wasn't too sure about Decatur's future," he said, "but that's changed now." We consider the Decatur Plant to be one of our best operations."

The Corporation has committed capital to the plant so that new equipment can be purchased. We will continue to look at future capital requests and approve those that make sense from a business standpoint.

He challenged Decatur employees to keep making progress. That's the key to the long term success of any operation. Companies are in business to make a profit. Those that don't are either closed or sold. Decatur is no longer faced with that prospect because they've done the job.

## Military Honors

Jack Dagg, son of Lloyd and Sharon Dagg, won the Army Achievement Medal. Jack is a heavy-vehicle mechanic with the 11th Engineer Battalion at Fort Belvoir and is a 1985 graduate of Blue Mound High School.

Lloyd is Maintenance foreman on 1st shift in the Maintenance Department.



Left to right, Roger Turner, Bill Price, foreman, and Bennett Wilkins.

make suggestions, earn extra cash, and give ideas a chance to grow.

Keep up the good suggestions!!



# Machine Repair Win Mueller League



Winner of the Mueller Bowling League for the 1986-87 season was the Machine Repair Team. The team consisted of George Madding - Captain (Machine Repair), Dick Backstein (Ground Key), Craig Griffin (Ground Key), Bob Marshall (Tool Room), Jerry West (Ground Key), and David Wilderman (Ground Key).

Final team standings were:

- 1st - Machine Repair
- 2nd - 80 B's
- 3rd - Foundry Rats
- 4th - Shipping Room
- 5th - High Five
- 6th - Tool Makers
- 7th - Duroseal
- 8th - Specialty Division
- 9th - Industrial Engineering
- 10th - Foundry

Team high series went to 80 B's with 2912;

while team high game was won by High Five with 1028. Skeet White (Ground Key) won individual high series with 663, individual high game with 257, and Skeet also finished the season with the highest overall average of 186.

League officer for the 1987 - 88 season will be: President — Ron Clutter, Financial Secretary - Tom McGeorge, Vice President - Herb Gibson, League Delegate - Gerald Stanley.

Congratulations to all the winners!!

## Who's New



Melissa Nicole, daughter of Jim and Kathie Jeffrey, was born March 15, 1987. She was welcomed home by sister, Michelle. Jim works in the Iron Foundry as a ladleman.

Ryan Dean, son of Richard and Judy Peifer, was born April 1, 1987. He was welcomed home by Adam. Richard works in the Brass Foundry as a Utility person.

Jason Scott, son of Wayne and Karla Gardner, was born April 22, 1987. He was welcomed home by brother Douglas. Wayne is presently on lay off status from Plant 4 Janitor.

## First Freedom From Smoking Class Completed

The first Freedom From Smoking Clinic, sponsored by the Mueller Co. Wellness Committee, has been completed. The class consisted of 15 participants and 12 out of those 15 have successfully quit smoking. This 7 week course was taught by Anita Thompson from the American Lung Association.

Pictured below are some of those who completed the course:

Future classes will be held. If you or your spouse are interested, please contact Tammy, ext. 258.

Congratulations to all of you for a job well done, you should all be proud of yourselves, WE'RE PROUD OF YOU!!!!!!

## Junior Achievement Awards Presented

Miss Barb Wylie, daughter of George and Jean Wylie, has been selected as "Officer of the Year - President" for the Decatur Junior Achievement Clubs for school year 1986-87. She was also selected to receive the "Outstanding Young Business Woman of the Year Award" for 1986-87 school year. Barb is a member of "Fire Jacs" sponsored by Firestone Co.

George is a supervisor in the Maintenance Department on 2nd shift at Plant 1.

Miss Nicole Horve, daughter of Bill and Regina Horve, has been selected to receive the Vice President Production Award for the 1986-87 school year, and was mistress of ceremony for this year's banquet. Nicole is a member of "Jams" sponsored by WSOY.

Bill is General Foreman of Maintenance at Plant 1.

The awards were presented at the Futures Unlimited Banquet held April 23, 1987.



Pictured left to right, starting with the top row: John Davis, John Norman - top row. Don Rieman, Charlie Mauck, Ronnie Romack, Alva Womack, J.D. Giles, Bob McCoy, Phil Duncan, Bob Koshinski - middle row. Dixie Bergfield, Art Hoehn - front row. Not pictured: Bill Henneman, Mark Hensen, Gary Perry.



## Terry McCoy Receives Top Scouting Award

Terry McCoy was awarded the **Silver Beaver Award** by the Lincoln Trails Council - Boy Scouts of America. The annual recognition program and reception was held on March 29, 1987, at the First United Methodist Church.

Terry's voluntary scouting background includes the following:

- Over 10 years as District Commissioner
- Troop 20 committeeman
- Assistant and Scoutmaster
- Holder of the Scouter's Key and District

Award of Merit

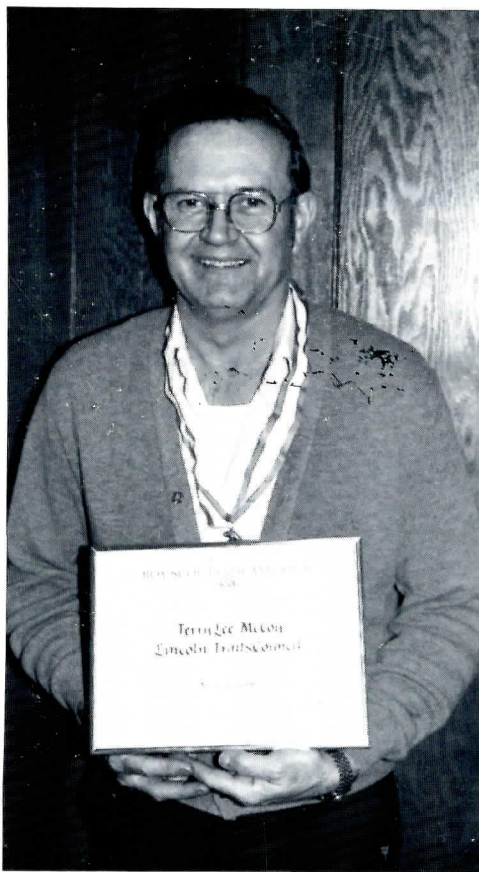
- National Jamboree Troop Scoutmaster
- Staff of the basic leaders training courses
- 2 years Philmont Leaders Course
- Area Commissioner's Conclaves

- W.D. Boyce College of Commissioning Science Course and Indian Trails District Commissioner's Training

Terry has also served the Decatur community as a Red Cross First aid trainer, and is an active member with the Cenois Amateur Radio Club (they play a key role in the speed boat races at Nelson Park), canoe races on the Sangamon River, walk-a-thons, bike-a-thons, and emergency traffic control due to either tornados or severe weather conditions.

Terry works in the Specialty Department as a Manufacturing Service Engineer and is active in the Mueller Management Club.

Congratulations!! We are all proud of you for receiving the highest award to be bestowed upon a volunteer in the scouting field, and for your dedication to the community.



Terry McCoy

## What Does Safety Mean?

Safety means a thorough understanding of your job — a knowledge of every step that must be taken — the realization that mistakes could be costly to yourself, other people, and the Company.

Safety means good judgement — never trusting to luck — being prepared to cope with unexpected situations as well as staying alert following your daily work routine.

Safety means consideration — for the family dependent upon you — for the Company that employs you — and your own welfare — three good reasons for avoiding unsafe acts.

Safety means remembering the safety rules — applying them every minute when you are on the job. A second's forgetfulness, a single risk, might mean an accident for which you could never make amends.

## Richard White Receives Scholarship Award

Mr. Richard Anthony White, son of Eugene "Skeet" and Dolores White, was chosen as the 1987 — 88 Mueller Co. Scholarship Award Winner from the Decatur Plant.

Richard will graduate from Argenta-Oreana High School in May and plans to attend Richland Community College in the Fall. His major will be Computer Science dealing with Agri-Business/Foods.

The honors bestowed upon Richard while at Argenta-Oreana High School include: Illinois State Scholar, National Merit Scholar, Academic All-American Student, Who's Who Among American High School Students, National Honor Society, High Honor Roll, Perfect Attendance Award, Band Director's Award 1984-85, and Outstanding Junior Band Member 1985-86.

Richard works as a night manager at Hardees located in the Hickory Point Mall.



Congratulations and Good Luck to you in furthering your education.

## Study Shows Health Care Costs Tied to Employee's Behavior

A four year study of 15,000 Control Data Corporation employees showed that employees with the worst life style habits have the biggest medical bills. Health-care costs for obese employees, for example were 11% higher than those for thin employees. Employees who failed to use seat belts spent an average of 54 more days in the hospital than employees who buckled up.

The research further showed that people whose weekly exercise was equivalent to climbing less than five flights of stairs or walked less than 1½ miles each week spent 114% more than those who climbed at least 15 flights of stairs or walked more than 1½ miles each week. Smokers who averaged one or more packs of cigarettes per day had 118% higher medical expenses than non-smokers.

In the 1920's the number one killer in the United States was infection. Today, the number one killer is lifestyle related illnesses. Each and every one of us can change our lifestyle. We can get involved in such things as Wellness Programs. In recent months, many employees and their spouses have participated in seminars to quit smoking and to deal with stress. The Wellness Committee has many additional activities planned in the coming months. Get involved and change your habits. You'll feel better and on the average, lower your health care costs!

## Stephen Byers Is Competition Winner

Stephen Byers, intern from Millikin University, has won District VIII (Illinois - Indiana) technical paper competition at the Institute of Industrial Engineers Midwest University District Conference at Iowa State University. His paper entitled "Standards Development for Multiple CNC Machine Cells" was based on his experiences at Mueller Co. through the Millikin internship program.

Other contestants included Karen DeWerff, John Marshall, Paul Taylor, and Dale Etscheid who have interned at Mueller Co. at various times.

## School Play

Stacey Mullins, daughter of Mike and Bonnie Mullins appeared in a one-act play, "An Apple for Teacher," on Thursday evening May 7, 1987 at Roosevelt Middle School. Mike works as a laborer in the foundry area.

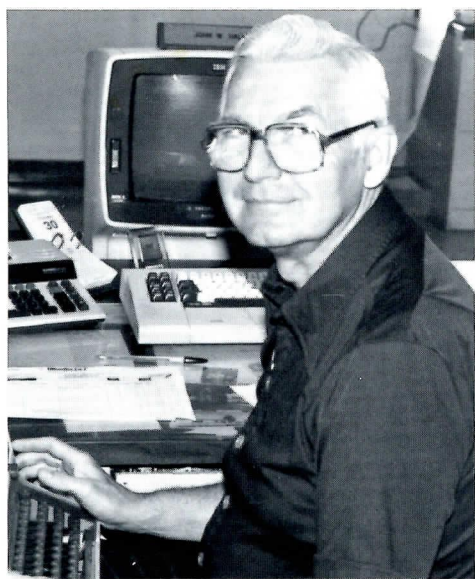
Jim Riner, son of William and Cecelia Riner, appeared as Charlie Brown on May 1, in the school play "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" at St. Teresa High School. He is a senior and will graduate May 20, 1987. William "Bill" is our Plant Manager.

Congratulations on your acting!!



To Your Good Health  
Or Can You Top This?

Service Awards  
April & May



John Hall

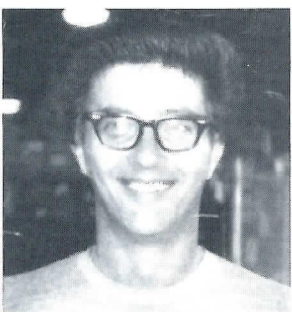
John Hall has worked 39½ years in Department 8300 - Warehouse and Shipping. He has not missed a full day of work due to sickness during this entire period. Congratulations John!! Mueller Co. is proud of you and your attendance record.

**5 YEARS**  
Angie Addison

**10 YEARS**  
Mark Neisslie  
Charles Lotzgesell  
Ron Gordon  
Charles Spence  
Mike Ramsey  
Martha Pillow  
Mike Mullins

**15 YEARS**  
David Andrews  
Tony Blackford  
Nancy Scherer

**20 YEARS**  
Mary Ann Lutes



John Morrison  
25 years



Larry Lourash  
25 years



Harold Small  
30 years



Vernon Brunner  
30 years



Art Hoehn  
30 years

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