

NEWSLETTER

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Don Bathe, Coordinator



Albertville - With the new service and process buildings now complete, the foundry building at the new plant is now under construction. The new Ajax furnaces are now being installed. The process

building has a floor space of 132,000 square feet and will house the machine shop, warehouse and shipping department.

A.G.A. OVERALL ENERGY PLAN

Solution of the natural gas shortage must be part of any overall energy plan, an official of the American Gas Association told a House Subcommittee.

Testifying before the Energy and Power Subcommittee of the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, George H. Lawrence, A.G.A. Senior Vice President, urged the adoption of a comprehensive energy-economic plan that would encourage prompt development of the Nation's vast potential natural gas supplies.

"Natural gas must receive priority consideration in the present efforts of Congress," said Lawrence, "It is the very heart of moving this nation toward domestic energy self-sufficiency in a way which will have the least price impact on customers; is most consistent with our goals of economic recovery and restraining inflation; and is most compatible with our environmental goals.

"These steps will sharply encourage prompt development of our nation's vast potential natural gas supplies and permit optimum utilization of our most efficient

and environmentally desirable energy system -- already in place, already being underutilized and with consumers already beginning to bear the cost burden of this forced inefficiency.

"If our nation's economy is to be stimulated and unemployment reduced, natural gas supplies must be increased," said Lawrence, adding that "we are already witnessing the dire results of our declining supplies."

"Natural gas is the only form of energy now suffering a shortage," Lawrence continued. "There are no present shortages of oil, electricity or coal which is available even though there are some drastically higher prices and the potential unreliability of imports.

"The Ways and Means proposal would stimulate the search for new supplies with maximum protection to the consumer," Lawrence commented.

"It would further remove the federal regulatory death grip on interstate gas supplies in an acceptable manner by permitting new higher incentive prices for new gas to be phased in with existing gas supplies under long terms contracts with the FPC regulating old gas until reserves are depleted."



Omer Mescher, single parts tester, Department 80, is receiving his gift from Tom Branson, Department 80, and fellow workers. Walter Jenkins, foreman in Department 80 and Omer stop for picture. Mescher lives on a small farm and plans on spending most of his time working on the farm.



EARLY FISHERMAN

It was the crack of dawn on Good Friday that a group of Decatur employees met at Sancrist Lake west of Kincaid, Illinois for a fishing contest that would last until noon.

The boats were all lined up, motors running. Soon the hour came -- someone called out "hi-ho Silver" and they were off. When the smoke cleared, the boats and fishermen were on their way. The swishing of the fishing rods and lines could be heard all around.

Noon was fast approaching and the boats and fishermen started to come in to weigh their fish. The trophy was shared by Ron Clutter, Buzzy Williams and Charles Schroeder. They each caught a bass weighing 48 oz. So went the Spring fishing contest by Mueller Co. employees.

HOUSING STARTS, PERMITS RATES SKIDDED IN MONTH

Housing starts fell in February to the second-lowest rate on record, and the issuance of building permits for future construction slumped to a record low.

Housing starts last month were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 977,000 units, down 2% from the upward-revised January rate of 966,000 units and off 48% from the year-earlier pace of 1,881,000, the Commerce Department said.

Aside from December's pace of 880,000 units, the February rate was the lowest since the government began keeping housing statistics in 1946. The February decline followed an upturn in January, the first in several months.

The low rate of housing starts in February had been expected, but "the permit rate is shockingly low," said Michael Sumichrast, chief economist of the National Association of Home Builders. As a result, any hope of a recovery in housing starts before June has evaporated, Mr. Sumichrast said.

On the positive side, housing sales appear to be picking up. The government reported last week that the annual sales rate of new single-family houses edged up 2% in January from December, although the rate still was down 20% from a year earlier. And home builders report that "February and March sales are better" than in January, said Mr. Sumichrast. However, builders still are sitting on an inventory of 400,000 unsold single-family houses, he said.



Virginia Benton, Accounting Department, upon her retirement on February 21, had a big day as everyone gathered around with gifts and a table covered with refreshments. She has no definite plans for her retirement -- just to take things as they come.

NEWS FROM SARNIA
(Phyllis Turner)



Albert Hiller, with Mrs. Hiller at his side, receive congratulations from Edgar Ellenor, Dick Dennis and Maurice Heath.

GUEST SPEAKER

Bill Horve, foreman machine repair department, Decatur, was invited to be guest speaker at Eisenhower High School by Mr. Lawson, instructor of the machine shop at the high school.

Bill was present at two classes, explained what industry has to offer in the trades of pattern makers, tool makers, machine repair and production machines. He then asked for questions and was surprised by the interest the students had taken in the machine shop course and his speech.

Horne told the class he felt the course was important and how he had gained by having had machine shop training in school.

Service Awards

Chattanooga

- 10 Years: William Holloway
20 Years: Sam Cline, Monroe Wilson, Louis C. Reynolds, Moses Coutcher, John H. Mazingo, George Davis, Charles Thornton, Ralph Means, Tom Pouncy, Monroe Adams, Harold H. Frederick.

Decatur

- 10 Years: Robert W. Shewmaker
20 Years: Harlow M. Oyler, Loren R. Hetzler

Brea

- 10 Years: Robert Barger, Ray Coffey
20 Years: Doug Moore

Sarnia

- 30 Years: Roy Parr, Ivan Mow

Retirements

Decatur

Omer J. Mescher, single parts tester in Dept. 80, 20 years, 6 months and 15 days, March 28.
John Morrison, Sr., torque adjuster, Dept. 80, 32 years, 6 months, 14 days, March 27 (80 plan)

Chattanooga

Lindsey Lawrence, chipper and grinder in iron foundry, 25 years, 2 months and 5 days, March 31 (80 plan)
Melvin S. Morris, assembly brush painter (hydrant), 5 years, 8 months and 3 days, March 31 (disability)
Howard T. Rogers, core maker and paster in core room, 31 Years, 11 months, 20 days, February 21 (80 plan)
Johnnie McClain, overhead crane operator in iron foundry, 20 years, February 24 (80 plan)
Clarence W. Carter, finished product assembler in assembly department, 20 years, 11 months and 6 days, February 24, (80 plan)
B.L. McClendon, machine operator, machine shop, 32 years, 6 months and 26 days, March 31 (80 plan)

Brea

Cruz F. Jacques, forge press operator, 26 years, 6 months and 28 days, February 28, (80 plan)
Frank P. Fritzer, machine operator, 34 years, 8 months and 24 days, April 22.

Sarnia

Albert Hiller, core stockman, 33 years, 7 months and 26 days.

FAMILIAR FACES IN NEW PLACES

In Decatur, Dennis Humes, formerly project engineer has been promoted to senior project engineer - section leader.

In Chattanooga, John T. Harp was promoted from shift foundry foreman, to the position of general foundry superintendent. Mr. Harp originally joined Mueller Co. March 5, 1947, working as a floor molder and has held various other supervisory positions prior to his latest promotion. Delta Brogden, Jr. was promoted to assistant foundry foreman on May 1, 1967 and later held the job of cleaning room foreman. In 1972 he was promoted to time study engineer where he remained until his promotion on January 1, 1975 to assistant foundry foreman --moldmaster complex. Terrell Gray was promoted January 1, 1975 to shift foundry foreman. Terrell joined Mueller Co. on April 6, 1955, and was made assistant foundry foreman on December 1, 1965. He later was made third shift foundry foreman and recently filled the position of assistant foundry foreman - moldmaster complex.

ACCIDENT ODDS DEPEND ON AGE, TIME AND PLACE

If you've ever wondered when and where the safest time and place to drive might be, these facts gleaned from the 1974 Accidents Facts book can help you locate them.

According to this statistical accident facts book, which is published annually by the National Safety Council, Rhode Island is the state with the lowest accident toll. District of Columbia is next, followed by Connecticut, New Jersey and New Hampshire.

The safest big city (500,000 and up population) is Indianapolis, Indiana. Buffalo, New York leads in the 350,000 - 500,000 population class while Topeka, Kansas, has the best record among 100,000 - 350,000 cities.

In the 50,000 - 100,000 population range, there's Great Falls, Montana, or West Covina, California. Below 50,000 the facts book lists many safety standouts.

The safest day to drive is Tuesday; the safest month, February. The most dangerous day and month combination is Saturday in October.

The safest time of a day to drive is between 5- 6 a.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. The most hazardous time is between 1 - 2 a.m. on Sunday.

The safest turnpikes in the country are the Purchase Parkway in Kentucky and the Dallas North Tollway in Texas.

As for those doing the driving, those in the 50 - 54 age bracket are least likely to be involved in a fatal accident; those most likely to are in the 20 - 24 age group.

The age group least involved in a traffic accident of any type is the 70 - 74 group, while drivers under 20 are most often involved.

Female drivers are less likely than males to be involved in any type of traffic accident. (The figure, however, does not take into consideration which sex drives the most miles).

Road conditions also affect traffic safety. The book shows that more than twice as many accidents happen on dry roads as on wet, snowy, or icy roads. And more than half of all accidents occur on straight and level roadways.

More fatal accidents occur at speeds of 50-59 mph than in any other speed range; the fewest at a 20-29 mph pace.

Most traffic accidents occur at speeds of less than 10 mph. The fewest occur at 70 mph or above, but those that do happen are most likely to involve graveyards and junkyards.

There is a traffic accident injury every 16 seconds; a death about every nine minutes.

To wrap it all together: A female in her early fifties driving along at about 25 mph at 5:30 on a Tuesday morning in February in Topeka, Kansas, or Great Falls, Montana, has the odds in her favor as far as avoiding a traffic accident is concerned.

For the rest of us, the best way to improve the odds against an accident is to drive as defensively and safely as possible regardless of when you're driving, where you're going, or what road or weather conditions are at the moment.

NATURAL GAS NEWS

The American Gas Association today strongly condemned a report of the National Academy of Sciences which indicates the United States would run out of natural gas in 25 years.

"There is no reasonable basis for that assessment," F. Donald Hart, President of A.G.A. said. "It is appalling that the only detailed studies of gas availability, made by the Potential Gas Committee regularly since 1964, have been ignored by the Academy."

He pointed out that the Academy in its report, "Mineral Resources and the Environment," merely "calculated" natural gas by some assumed factor applied to its detailed work done for crude oil resources.

"The discovery of natural gas cannot be relegated to a 'mathematical computation'," Hart stated.

"No one will argue that present proved reserves of oil and gas in the U.S. are approaching critically low levels. Taken out of context, however, recognition of this fact presents a doomsday situation," Hart said.

"That is exactly what we are confronted with," he stated, "if we accept the assumptions that technology will not improve oil and gas finding and recovery rates, that alternatives or substitutes for critical materials will not be found -- in brief, if we believe man's ability to meet challenges and develop solutions are things of the past.

ALBERTVILLE STAFF ADDS JUSTICE

Max B. Justice, assistant specialty production control manager, Mueller Co., Decatur, has been transferred to Albertville, Alabama, assuming the position of production and inventory control supervisor.

Justice, a native of Argenta, joined Mueller Co. in 1962, beginning in the factory, moving into the offices in 1963 where he has held various positions.

Max, his wife Betty and two daughters will be living in Boaz, Alabama.

News Briefs

25 YEARS AGO

Borg-Warner Corp., which in May 1948 leased Mueller Co. Plant No. 3 for five years, announced that its Marvel-Schebler Carburetor division now in Flint, Michigan, will be transferred to Decatur in late summer or early fall.