

# Mueller Service Lines

FEBRUARY 1978

NEWS ABOUT MUELLER MARKETS, PLANTS, PRODUCTS, PERFORMANCE, AND PEOPLE

## Mueller team makes Western Service Center successful.

What compelled six experienced employees to move from Southern California to Sparks, Nevada? What motivated them to take with them one million pounds of Mueller inventory, hire and train a new staff of 19 employees and establish a warehouse to serve Mueller customers in the Western District? And do it all successfully? The Mueller Margin.

When Mueller decided to make the move from Brea, California, to Sparks, Nevada, that is exactly what happened — a big move made with a minimum of difficulty.

"In the beginning, it was anybody's guess as to how long it would be before our operation would resume normal efficiency," explains Ron Hood, Manager of the Western Service Center. "Original estimates were between three to six months after our opening date of November 1, 1976. However, after our first month of operation, we found that we had shipped over one half million pounds of material. Far exceeding everyone's expectations."

This type of progress was made possible by the leadership of the six employees who made the Sparks move, taking with them the concept of the Mueller Margin. The new employees also contributed greatly to the progress. According to Ron Hood, "They showed a desire to learn and work beyond normal expectations, which is what the Mueller Margin is all about."

### Why the Reno-Sparks area?

Mueller found several excellent reasons to relocate in Sparks, a city adjoining Reno, Nevada. The location is ideal because it is central to the 11 western states serviced by the Center. Abundant railways and trucking lines through the Sparks-Reno area

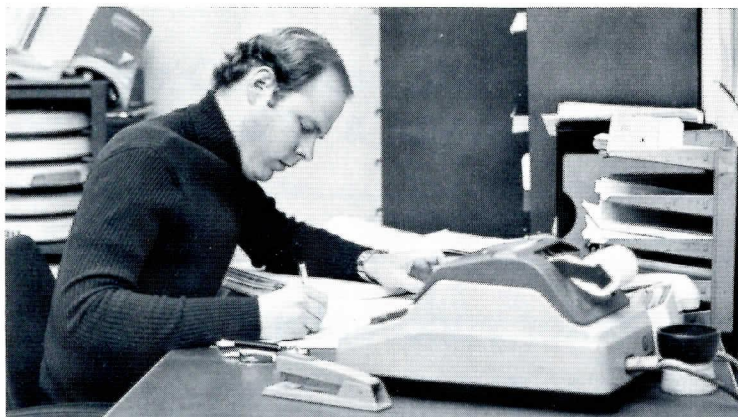
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These six Mueller employees pioneered the Sparks move. From left to right: Cathy Matthews, Sales Service Correspondent; Sandy Polston, Sales Service Supervisor; Ron Hood, Service Center Manager; Larry Kohls, Shipping and Warehouse Supervisor; Chuck McBeth, Controller/Credit Manager; Tom Myers, Data Processing Supervisor and Inventory Analyst.



The Western Service Center in Sparks, Nevada, is an enclosed warehouse facility sitting on 44,000 square feet of land. Six truck docks provide easy loading and unloading of Mueller products.



In Data Processing, an inventory program is being prepared by Tom Myers, Data Processing Supervisor and Inventory Analyst.



Processing purchase orders and handling other paper work for the Center are, from left to right: Sue McGraw, Secretary; Sandra Albot, Receivables Clerk; and Bea Carson, Accounting Clerk.

#### *Mueller team continued*

provide convenient access to those 11 western states.

Economically, this area is a good choice for another reason. The Freeport Law exempts from state taxation, all personal property in transit through the state while it is being stored, assembled and processed.

Sparks-Reno is also a community receptive to business development and has a wealth of labor resources. Population for the area is 132,000 and is anticipated to increase 30,000 by 1980.

The beautiful climate and neighboring resort areas make the area ideal for family life as well as for business. Lake Tahoe, a popular year-round resort, is only 50 miles away. Carson City, Nevada's capitol, is only 35 miles away.

#### **Byword is Service.**

"Our byword at the Center is SERVICE and we try to instill in our people Mueller's philosophy that our customers can live with-

out us, but we can't live without our customers," Ron Hood says.

The Center services the Western District which is composed of all the states west of the Continental Divide (including Alaska and Hawaii) plus Baja California, Mexico.

Doing this requires innovation at times. The Center personnel found a better mode of freight transportation to help service accounts even more quickly and inexpensively than before.

Transporting Mueller's freight by rail used to take from two to four weeks. So, the Mueller Western Service Center contracted with several co-op trucking companies to transport the freight. Now it takes only three to five days.

#### **About these Mueller people**

When asked what they like most about working at the Western Service Center, the employees have many common responses. Summed up by Beatrice Carson,

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(Above) When a shipping order reaches the Shipping Office, each item is found in the location cards by Office Clerk, Judy Owens.



(Right corner) Shipping Clerk Dwight Trigueiro securely straps Mueller products onto pallets for loading.



(Right) Neatly and securely packaging and labeling items, Mike Smith, Shipping Clerk, displays the Mueller Margin in his work.



Allan Ash, Assistant Warehouse Foreman, prepares to load Mueller hydrants onto a waiting truck.

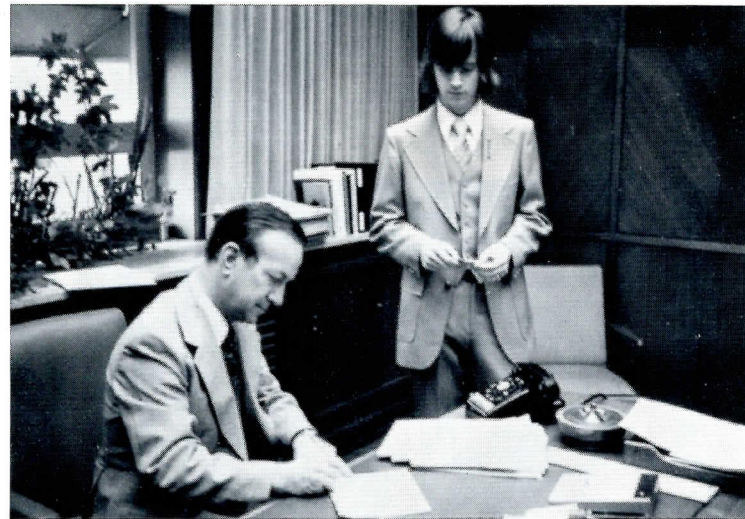


# Strictly Personal Decatur

Don Bathe

## NEWS ABOUT MUELLER CO. EMPLOYEES AND THEIR FAMILIES

J. A. - PRESIDENT  
CALLS ON  
HARLAN WHITE - PRESIDENT



Greg Simpson, president of the junior achievement group Students in Business (S.I.B.), is calling on Harlan A. White, president of Mueller Co., to sell stock in the new J.A. company that is sponsored by Mueller Co. The Mueller Co.

employees working with J.A. are Diane Lawrence, Lee Best and Don Pasley. Evelyn Cox, working with Junior Achievement for several years is treasurer of National Association of Accountants this year.

### SERVICE AWARDS Decatur

10 years: Georgenia J. Utterback  
20 years: Larry W. Donaldson  
40 years: Walter R. Donaldson

#### Outside Sales

20 years: Charles W. Freeman  
Matthew D. Sylvan

### RETIREMENTS

**Olive VanLear**, sales posting clerk, 13 years, 7 months, 7 days, November 3, 1977.

**Clyde E. Pulliam**, meter riser packer Dept. 80, 18 years, 3 months, 15 days, November 15, 1977.

**Delmar J. Baum**, semi-automatic chucking machine operator Dept. 80, 39 years, 4 months and 5 days, December 30, 1977 (80 plan).

**Royal E. Skelley**, pattern-maker "A" Dept. 35, 34 years, 7 months and 27 days, December 30, 1977 (80 plan).

### FAMILIAR FACES IN NEW PLACES

**Robert Sands**, formerly assistant project engineer, has been promoted to the position of project engineer.

**Dennis Stansifer**, formerly assistant project engineer, has been promoted to the position of project engineer.

**Carroll Virt**, formerly assistant ground key foreman, has been promoted to manufacturing service engineer.

**Melvin Whittington**, formerly quality control technician, has been promoted to manufacturing service engineer.

**Robert Oyler**, senior inspector, has been promoted to assistant ground key foreman, 2nd shift.

**John Norman**, formerly inspector, has been promoted to assistant ground key foreman, 1st shift.

**George Deffenbaugh**, formerly assistant ground key foreman, has been promoted to the position of manufacturing service engineer.

### SNOW MOVERS



Merle and Raymond Howell, millwrights in the maintenance department, appear to be getting ready for a centennial in displaying their

beards. The Howell brothers have been in charge of the snow removal in our parking lots and sidewalks.



Clyde Pulliam, a meter riser packer Dept. 80, stops for a picture to show his retirement gift and display a big smile.

## Building plan.



**Take stock in America.  
Buy U.S. Savings Bonds.**



Olive VanLear, sales, shows her retirement gifts to Ron Grant and co-workers,



Delmar Baum, semi-automatic chucking machine operator Dept. 80, receives a retirement gift from Dean Hadden.



Howard Mayberry, tool grinder Dept. 36, grinding a new tool, began work at Mueller Co. August, 1958. Howard is a music maker on weekends. He is the leader of a country-western group known as the "Mayberry trio." Howard be-

gan playing about twenty years ago, during which time he has had the opportunity to play and sing with country western star, Roy Clark and has recorded two records in Nashville.



Accounting/Data Processing at the Western Service Center is handled by, from left to right: Cynthia Adkins, Tom Myers, Mary Husband, Chuck McBeth, Sandy Albot and Cheryl Brandt.



Shipping Dept. team at Sparks, from left to right: Allan Ash, Don Anhold, Larry Kohls, Judy Owens, Mike Smith and Dwight Trigreiro.



Staffing the Sales Dept. at the Center are, from left to right (front row): Sue McGraw, Keitha Greene, Sheri Peterson; (back row) Sandy Polston, Pat Xander, Pat Sargent, Cathy Matthews, Donna Brothers and Cathy Gillett. (Not pictured) Richard Donnelly.

#### Mueller team continued

Accounting Clerk, "Mueller Co. has good basics. The systems are tried and true, the employee benefits are good and the working conditions are pleasant."

The small size of the Center and the small number of employees causes a closeness among these Mueller people. They are a team

not only at work but at play as well with softball games on Saturdays, a bowling league and an annual May-Day picnic.

This closeness benefits not only employee well-being but the Center's success as well. It produces that noticeable margin of quality — the Mueller Margin. □

## Good news on the energy front: Mexico — big new oil source.

Mexico is predicted to become a major oil exporter within three to five years, according to the United States-Mexico Chamber of Commerce. This growth as an oil power is due to recent discoveries of new oil deposits.

There have been three major discoveries promising vast yields of oil and natural gas: Tabasco, Chiapas and the Gulf of Campeche. Experts say the Campeche deposit will be larger than the entire Alaskan North Slope discovery.

The Mexican oil fields have the advantage of location. They can be connected easily to existing U.S. pipelines. Six major U.S. gas producers and the Mexican

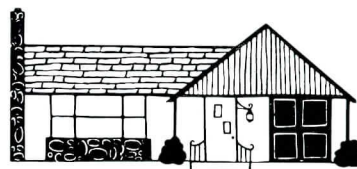
Government have already agreed to divert natural gas to the U.S.

Costs for the Mexican project will be considerably lower than for the Trans-Alaska pipeline project. One reason is shorter distance the pipelines would cover from the fields to the U.S. border. Another is friendlier climate and terrain.

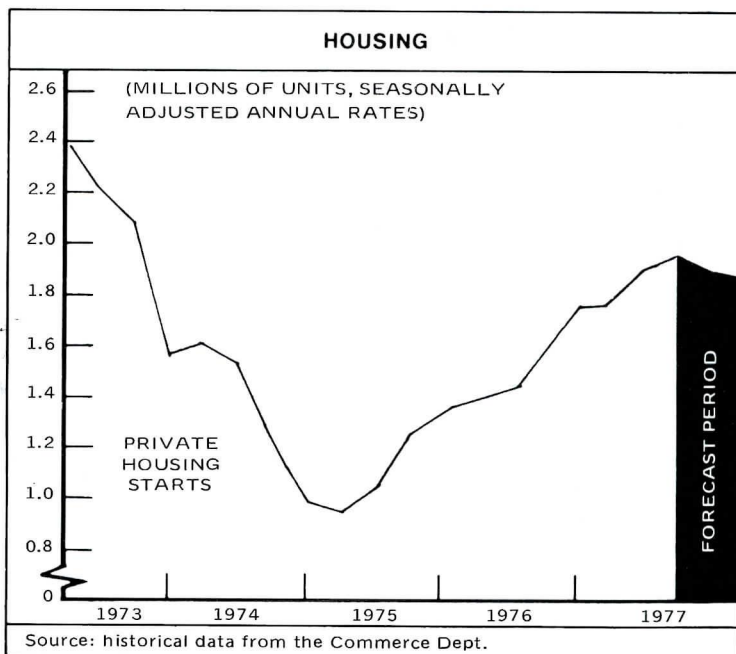
Completion time for a Mexican pipeline is estimated at 12 to 24 months. Considerably less than the time required for the Alaskan project to start production.

According to the U.S.-Mexico Chamber, these oil discoveries may be a partial answer to future U.S. energy needs. □

## The Housing Scene



New housing starts fell off somewhat in August, but the industry will probably not experience a recession-size drop. One area to watch, according to Engineering News Record, is the flight of money from savings and loans, the major source of mortgage funds, to higher rates elsewhere. This could put a damper on construction. □



## Editorial

# Mueller Co. faces stiff competition in a specialized field

How many competitors does Mueller Co. have?

Top management knows. Sales, marketing and advertising know. But the men and women in the plant who make the products that face the competition seldom have an opportunity to learn just who it is their products compete against. Or just how stiff the competition is.

The list of companies in the water and gas distribution products business contains some well-known names. It is made up of firms who regularly advertise their products in civic magazines and trade journals directed toward water and gas utilities.

These companies make some or most of such products as valves, fittings, hydrants, clamps, pipe repair products, brass goods, meter boxes and drilling machines . . . the products Mueller builds.

### Reason is a two-word answer

The how and why of Mueller Co.'s success can be summed up in two simple words: **QUALITY** and **INNOVATION**.

These are the direct result of the "Mueller Margin." But only as long as that margin of quality and innovation is maintained, will Mueller Co. remain a dominant force in the water and gas distribution field.

Keeping the Mueller Margin alive is not complicated. It's a matter of *cost consciousness* at every operating level to help us stay competitive. It means *cutting rejection rates by eliminating waste* . . . waste of time and materials. It means *increasing production efficiency*, in general, to keep up with our customers' demands for faster service . . . the kind they can get from some of the other names on this list.

If we can accomplish this, Mueller Co. will continue to produce top quality products at reasonable costs. We'll also meet production schedules, and earn the kind of profit that will enable us to develop new products and new markets. These will provide new opportunities and new jobs for more and more people.

But more important to you who are employed here today, it will allow Mueller Co. to maintain

employee benefits for your security now and during retirement.

What conclusions can be drawn from the partial list of competitors shown here? For one thing, Mueller Co. is selling against some industry giants . . . firms whose products in this field are backed by huge, diversified corporations with a broader base to spread costs, some with fewer products and longer production

runs, and some with a company policy to sell low to penetrate the market.

By comparison, Mueller Co. has focused on a full range of products for the water and gas distribution industry.

*And Mueller Co. has become one of the best known and most respected names in this industry, and one of the few to offer a full line of both water and gas distribution equipment.* □

### It's all of these and more (worldwide) against us . . .

Allis Chalmers Corp.  
APAC Mfg.  
American Darling Valve & Mfg. Co.  
Ametek/Plymouth Products Div.  
A. W. Cash Valve Mfg. Corp.  
A. Y. McDonald Mfg. Co.  
BIF (General Signal Corp.)  
California Brass Mfg. Co.  
Canada Valve  
Clow Corp.  
Continental Industries, Inc.  
Crane Co.  
Demco Inc.  
DeZurik (General Signal Corp.)  
Dover Corp.  
Dresser Industries, Inc.  
East Jordan Iron Works, Inc.  
Farnan Brass Works, Co.  
F. B. Leopold Co.  
Ford Meter Box Co.  
Frandsen Bros. Tool & Mfg. Co.  
Glauber Valve Co.  
Golden-Anderson Valve Specialty Co.  
Grand Haven Brass Foundry  
Henry Pratt Co.  
James Jones Co.  
Jenkins Bros.

Johns Manville Pipeline Acc. Corp.  
Kennedy Valve Mfg. Co.  
Lattimer-Stevens Co.  
M. B. Skinner Co.  
Mead Pipe  
Nibco, Inc.  
Ohio Brass Co.  
Or Equal  
Pacific States Cast Iron Pipe Co.  
Red Head Mfg. Co.  
R. H. Baker & Co.  
Rich Valve  
Rockford-Eclipse Div., Eclipse Corp.  
Rockwell International Corp.  
Sprague Meter Div., Textron Inc.  
T. D. Williamson, Inc.  
Traverse City Iron Works  
Trinity Valley Iron & Steel Co.  
TRW Mission Mfg. Co.  
Tyler Pipe Industries, Inc.  
U.S. Pipe & Foundry Co.  
Valve & Primer Corp.  
Walworth Co.  
Waterous Co.  
Watts Regulator Co.  
Welsbach Corp.  
Wilkins Regulator Div., Zurn Ind., Inc.

## OUR COMPETITORS MAKE GOOD PRODUCTS. WHAT MAKES OURS BETTER IS YOU... BECAUSE YOU ARE THE MUELLER MARGIN!



Take a look at that list of competitors again. It's only a partial list. Remember, there are more, and they all make good products. How can we keep our products on top? With your help. The difference between ours and theirs is quality. The Mueller Margin.

**MUELLER® CO.**  
**DECATUR, ILL. 62525**

Factories at Decatur, Ill., Chattanooga, Tenn., Albertville, Ala.  
MUELLER LIMITED, Sarnia, Ont., St. Jerome Que., Canada.  
Sales office and Western Service Center, Sparks, Nevada.

*serving the water and gas industries since 1857*