

# Mueller Service Lines

JUNE 1978

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

## Meet Robert J. Ott, General Sales Manager

Meet Bob Ott, our new General Sales Manager. He was promoted to this position to succeed Warren D. Crawford who recently resigned to go with one of our leading distributors in Texas.

Bob majored in economics at Notre Dame where he was graduated in 1949. For the following four years he was a Navy man.

In 1954, Bob was playing golf with Robert Morris, then General Sales Manager of Mueller Co. This Mueller man talked so highly of the company he worked for that Bob Ott was quite impressed. At the time, Bob was a salesman and Advertising & Sales Promotion Manager for another company.

Bob visited Mueller Co. in January, 1955. The company had no openings but Bob refused to take no for an answer. Mueller management was impressed with Bob's persistence and his obvious interest and regard for the company.

So Bob became an intern, of sorts. He worked throughout the plant and took extensive notes on the various aspects of each job. These notes were then used to help set up the original sales training program for the company, which later developed into a formalized program for our newly hired sales trainees.

Bob still recalls how impressed he was with the pride in workmanship he witnessed during that time.

Ever since, Bob has what he calls a severe case of "Muelleritis." It's a bug that has bitten most at Mueller Co. Here are the symptoms: a deep concern for the success of the entire organization; the job is more than "just another job"; and the person feels pride in his job and his abilities.

After completion of the sales training program in August, 1956, Bob became a sales repre-

sentative in Mississippi and part of Alabama. In 1957 he moved to the Georgia-Alabama territory headquarters in Atlanta. Bob was promoted to the District Manager of the Southern District in 1960. Atlanta, Georgia was his home until his recent move to Decatur with this promotion.

### Returning to his native city

After a 23 year absence, Bob is returning to his native Decatur with mixed emotions. He is excited about the challenges of his new position and has happy memories of the city where he grew up. Yet, he had grown quite fond of Atlanta. After 20 years, he says, he was finally beginning to feel like a successfully transplanted Yankee.

*Continued on page 3*



Bob Ott, new General Sales Manager, spends most of his time on the phone. "I try to give calls from customers or field sales people top priority. Quick access to information and answers is important to keeping customers sold on Mueller."

## A day in the life of a sales representative

*What is a Mueller Co. sales representative and what does he do? Here's how one of Mueller Co.'s 56 representatives might answer that question.*

Hmmmm. Not much mail today, only five envelopes. I usually get eight to ten. Let's see . . . invoices . . . copies of orders . . . What's this? A questionnaire?

This is interesting. Someone wants to do an article about sales representatives so they sent me a questionnaire to help them. Hey! That's a great idea. Sometimes we sales reps are a misunderstood bunch.

Let's see . . . Question #1. *What time does your day usually begin and end?* Gee, it's never that cut and dried. It's not an 8 to 5 job. Most days, I start at 6:00 a.m. Not by choice but that's about

the time the phone starts ringing. I like to call it a day around 5:30 but many times, it's not until 9:00 that the last report gets filed or I make that final phone call. And then a customer could call at any hour with a problem.

Sometimes I feel like that phone grew out of my hand, with an average of 10 calls a day. One day I made over 20 calls doing some follow-up on a bid opening.

Question #2: *What is your main responsibility?* I guess I'd have to say that's assuring maximum customer satisfaction. And my 1,500 customers keep me hard at it. I provide follow-up after the sale and I try to get good delivery dates. I make calls, teach applications to customers,

answer complaints and help solve problems.

It may sound corny, but I try to represent Mueller Co. as best I can in all my customer dealings. Because the customers deserve my best. Let's face it, without customers, I'd be out of a job and Mueller would be out of business, too.

As I see it, if we're worthy of the customer's trust and confidence, he'll send us his order. Then he's entitled to proof of our sincerity by professional performance both before and after the sale.

Even if a guy never becomes a Mueller customer, he'll know that a professional effort was made to make him a customer.

*Continued on page 2*



*A day in the life continued*

Maybe I should also list SELLING Mueller products as a responsibility. Seems obvious, but Greg next door would laugh if he saw that.

He's constantly ribbing me by saying, "You don't really sell hydrants, Don, they grow out of the ground on street corners!" What a character, he thinks I have it made. If he only knew how stiff the competition is.

And his wife, Julie, she doesn't understand my job. She's always telling my wife she feels sorry for our family 'cause I'm NEVER home.

I wonder how my wife really feels. After all these years, she still says, "You're married to that job, not me!" She doesn't understand the whole crazy business, either. But she's more than willing to keep an itinerary when I travel to help a customer track me down in an emergency . . . I should tell her how I appreciate that.

The kids are the ones that my traveling bothers most. They don't like interruptions to our family evenings or cancelled outings. But they sure are proud of me. Really stand behind me.

And on vacation last summer, it became a game to spot Mueller hydrants in towns we passed through. If a town didn't have Mueller, my little girl asked, "Why didn't you sell one here, Daddy?"

Back to the questionnaire . . . Question #3: *What are the advantages of a home-based office?* I don't have to beat the traffic to get to work. And my customers know where to reach me 24 hours a day, seven days a week . . . something they certainly take advantage of. All my records and files are readily available, too.

There's one major drawback, though. You can't "leave your work at the office." It's also tough to get time to myself, even on vacation.

I remember one three-day weekend when I planned to stay home and paint the trim on the house. I got a call on Friday afternoon at 3. I ended up spending the whole weekend in the field with a customer. My family managed to "bite the bullet" and carry on without me. They really are a great family.

Next question: *What characteristics make a good sales representative?* Well, obviously you have to love to sell, and like people. You also have to be able to carry on a hunting, fishing or golfing conversation.

And, you have to back it all up with product knowledge. A lot of product knowledge. You have to know our products inside and out and be able to recite the catalog in your sleep. You have to know the competitor's products, too. And know what makes our products better than theirs.

It also doesn't hurt to be self-motivated, patient, able to solve problems as they arise.

*What's a good day like?* Last Thursday was a great day. I followed my schedule without major delays, all of my customers were "in" when I called on them and the weather was super. I had coffee with a customer and was able to solve a problem for him. I finally got an order on a job I'd been working on for several weeks. And the real shock that made me feel appreciated — a customer treated me to lunch.

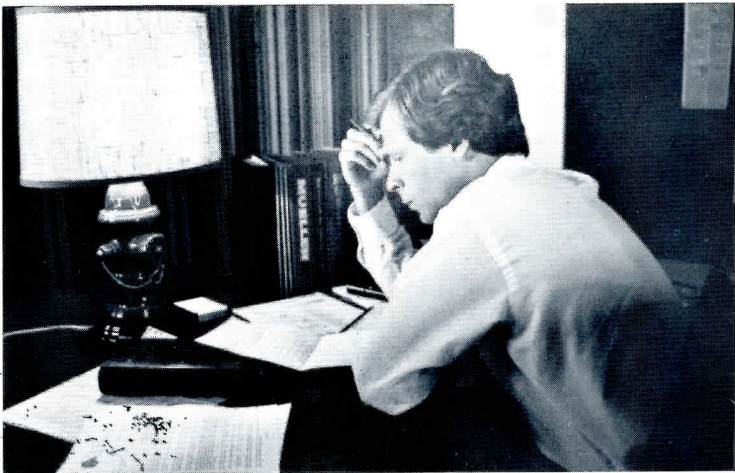
*What's a bad day like?* Mondays are rough for everyone but last Monday . . . whew! I had to go out in the field for several hours in the rain. I had to face a customer with the news that his material, already four weeks past the promised delivery date, was not in. And that there was no help in sight. Three other customers called me that day asking why their shipments were past due, too.

But the blow that really ruined my day was to see a competitor get the order I was working on. This particular competitor was able to promise, actually guarantee, a sooner delivery date than I could. Man that hurt!

*What's the hardest part of your job?* I wonder if they really want to know. Keeping up with the paperwork . . . reports . . . surveys . . . can all be a drag. Sometimes the traveling gets to me . . . bad weather . . . heavy traffic.

But . . . if they really want to know . . . the hardest thing for me is making excuses for late deliveries. It's tough to cope with long delivery dates.

Late deliveries cause BAD feelings on the part of the customer. It interrupts things for them. Imagine how a contractor would feel — on the job with men and machines, ditches open — and



"What's the hardest part of my job? I wonder if they really want to know?" asks our sales representative as he ponders our questionnaire.

NO product! Missed promises are our worst enemy.

I do my best to smooth things over. And I understand the factory people are doing a heck of a job to alleviate this problem with Saturday shifts and overtime.

We need to prove that we can deliver a good product in a reasonable amount of time. We have to keep our promises. We're good, but with competition giving better lead times, we're not good enough.

Next question — *What's the most fun you've ever had on the job?* It seems that everyday holds some sort of "fun" for me. Calling on friends I've made through longtime association . . . making a sale . . . telling the Mueller story to a customer who was using a competitive product and switching him to Mueller.

I got to do that last Friday with the help of the Mueller Margin.

The Mueller Margin has always been a part of our sales force, but now that we've given a name

to the idea, it's a valuable selling point. It gives me confidence when I call on a new or potential client. It means recognition and they accept us as a leader in the industry.

Customers know we'll do anything we can to help them. The Mueller Margin means team effort and dedication. It's another reason that Mueller is a respected company.

*Why do you like working for your company?* After all these years, it's in my blood, I guess. It's a big part of my life. My job's still a challenge because there are always more goals to strive for, more sales to make. I have people in the company that I can count on. We have great people at Mueller and we make great products.

There goes the phone, again! I'll have to put this questionnaire on "hold" for awhile. It's probably a customer . . . I think there's an unwritten slogan that goes — "When all else fails, call your Mueller man." □



This story could have been written by any one of our 54 sales representatives located throughout the U.S., as shown here.



# Strictly Personal Decatur

Don Bathe

## NEWS ABOUT MUELLER CO. EMPLOYEES AND THEIR FAMILIES



**Robert J. Ott  
To Decatur**

Robert J. Ott has been promoted to the position of General Sales Manager of Mueller Co. effective April 1, 1978. Ott will be responsible for the sales activities of all the field sales personnel and the sales office personnel in the United States.

Ott, a native of Decatur, joined Mueller Co. as a Sales Representative in 1955 and was promoted to the position of District Manager of the Southern District based in Atlanta, Georgia in 1960.

Ott is married to the former Patricia Stitt. They have two children, Cathy who lives with her parents and David who resides in Atlanta.

Ott and his family will make their home in Warrensburg.

### RETIREES

**Kenneth Lee Smith**, 365 New Britain automatic operator in Dept. 80, 25 years, 6 months and 5 days, April 12, 1978.

**Paul W. Dazey**, torque adjuster, Dept. 80, 34 years, 10 months and 13 days, May 15, 1978.

**Warren D. Crawford**, vice president and general sales manager, 25 years, 6 months and 16 days, May 16, 1978 (rule of 80)

**Jack Rubicam**, sales representative, 42 years, 7 months and 24 days, May 31, 1978 (rule of 80).

### MACHINE REPAIR MEN CALLED IN

On Thursday evening, March 23, with Good Friday coming to make for a long weekend for everyone, Bill Horve, Machine Repair Foreman, received a call at 10:05 P.M. from George Lebo, Production Superintendent, informing him that a problem had come up with the hex filtering screen located on the fourth floor level near the roof in the brass foundry leading to the sand muller. Bill then called his men and after explaining the situation to them, he asked them to report to work at 7:00 A.M. Good Friday morning.

Upon investigation, they found that the drive shaft was broken and that the hub had the spokes broken out. Having no shaft in stock, the men had to make a new one. Bill assigned half of his personnel to making a new shaft and the other half to dismantling the old shaft and hub.

The men got a piece of bar stock from Dept. 70 stock and set up their machine to begin turning down to size (3-7/16" dia. x 11'0" long, weighing 375 lbs.). All during the day it rained and froze, causing Decatur to experience one of the most severe ice storms in its history. Several areas were losing power, creating a hardship on everyone affected.

Saturday morning as the men were continuing to turn the shaft down and welding the spokes back on the hub, it was Mueller Co.'s turn with a power outage at Plant 1. Not knowing how long the power would be off, Bill sent his men home, prepared to return when the power was restored. The power was off about two hours and the men came back and completed making the new parts and moved them to the foundry for installation on Sunday.

Sunday morning the men reported to work and went to the foundry to install the new parts. While getting ready at 8:00 A.M., Mueller Co. was hit with a

power outage at Plant 4 and was off about four hours. Bill was able to secure some generator sets for portable lights. Due to the extreme height of the area of the hex screen, installation of the portable lights did very little in making the job better.

Unable to use a hoist to lift the shaft due to the power outage, the men raised the shaft to the first floor using a high lift truck. Then, for the remainder of the next three levels, a block and tackle was used to get the shaft up the stairs. The further they went up, the less light they had and when they got to the hex screen, it was almost in total darkness. The men had to start working the shaft into place. All tools and equipment used on the job also had to be raised and lowered by using the block and tackle method.

The hex screen repair was completed at 1:00 A.M. Monday morning and was ready at the beginning of the shift.

A total of 1008 man hours was spent in getting this job done. The machine repair men on the job were Bill Horve, Murl Lee, Lloyd Schumacher, Ray Donaldson, James Leinard, Carl Klaus, Wayne Dortch and Steve Albros, Plant 4 Maintenance.

Many thanks to the men of the Machine Repair and Maintenance Departments for a job well done.

### HATS OFF

Hats off to the following employees who kept a vigil over the foundry during the ice storm on Good Friday weekend.

Carl Schuman  
Dale Spires  
Clay Ramsey  
Charles Schroeder  
William Henneman  
Clifford Hammel  
Homer Hooker  
Charles Kingery  
Leonard Morr  
James VanMatre  
Ben Wilkins  
Verlyn Burnett  
William Kaigley  
Dave Taylor

As everyone was getting up for their Good Friday morning coffee, they found it raining and freezing ice on everything. The tree limbs were hanging to the ground, power lines were breaking causing power failure in many areas.

Carl Schuman's home was in one of those areas that lost their power. Unable to do anything at home due to a power outage, Carl decided to go to the foundry to check on the equipment. When he arrived he discovered that the foundry power was off. He then called George Lebo, who in turn called the men in to take care of the machinery.

With power off and the electric furnaces starting to cool, the decision was made to dump the molten metal out of the Brown Boveri furnace to keep it from being damaged in case the metal should become solid. After dumping, it was necessary to do extensive repair work. All of the men pitched in and worked as a team. Some of the men from the Machine Repair Department that were working on the hex filter screen assisted in completing the necessary emergency work.

### FAMILIAR FACES IN NEW PLACES

**Ted Workman**, former assistant brass foundry foreman, has been appointed to the position of assistant ground key foreman.

**Larry Cooper**, foreman brass grinder, has been promoted to the position of assistant brass foundry foreman.

### FAMILY PICNIC

Come one, come all, Mueller Co. employees and retirees are invited to join in on a picnic, Saturday, July 29, starting at 11:00 A.M. in the pavilion located at the Shelbyville Dam access area. Plan on an afternoon of fun and relaxation. Beach is nearby.

Bring meat, cold dish and table service. If any questions, call May Ann Lutz on ext. 318.



## SERVICE AWARDS

### Decatur

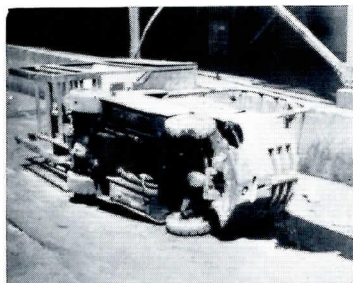
0 years: Gary L. Hodges  
Steve A. Holsapple  
Allen Greenwood  
Clinton L. Taylor  
Sharon A. Cochran  
Robert E. Green  
Donald E. Weemer  
George L. Nickell  
Oscar W. Sands  
Raymond J. Kaufman  
Leonard Morr  
Lyle E. Galvin  
Susan M. Berner  
Dennis W. Humes  
0 years: Norvill R. Fenton  
Mary Ann Broske  
L. Jane Miller  
Juanita M. Ferguson  
Harold G. Dingman  
Cecil A. Brown  
0 years: M. Maxine Griffith  
John Hall  
0 years: Robert F. Armstrong  
**Sarnia**  
0 years: Fred Carter



Kent Elliott, Dept. 47, just completed thirteen week course in Emergency, Medical, Technical, Ambulance (EMTA) training and a three weeks course in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), going two nights a week at Sara Bush Medical Center at Mattoon, Illinois.

A part of Kent's training was in the emergency room at the Medical Center. Writing on State of Illinois Certified Test, National Certified Test and Practical Examination he will be qualified to work with the ambulance service and fire department at Bethany, Illinois.

## ACCIDENTS DO HAPPEN

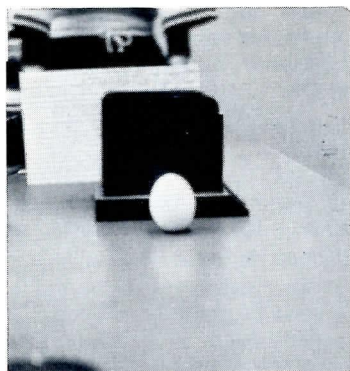


A plant 4 highlift operator will agree as he was able to walk away after his highlift turned over.



Gregory Wilson is a firm believer in wearing safety glasses. Greg was working around the iron molding area as metal was being poured which splattered and some of it hit his glasses, causing them to shatter.

### First Day of Spring



First day of spring is the only day that an egg can be stood on end as shown in this photo.

## RETIREES



Paul Dazey (top photo) with gift in hand as Paul Bollhurst looks on is joined by other retirees and fellow workers (lower photo).



Kenneth Smith is joined by on lookers on the day of his retirement.



Warren Crawford cleaned his desk off on last day.

## Fishing Contest



William (Red) Henneman - Ron Chaney won first place at the annual bass fishing contest at Sancrist Lake west of Kincaid, Illinois.

Red and Ron Chaney caught the biggest bass and the most fish in pounds.



Ron Clutter - Russel Hall came in second.

Russ, who has been fishing only a few times, took some side bets as to the size of fish to be caught. Call it beginners luck or the knowledge of fishing, because he came out a winner. Russ says "better luck next time," to some of the born losers.

## RECEIVES AWARD



Darrel Hartwig receives his 30 year service award from Dean Grant.



*A day in the life continued*

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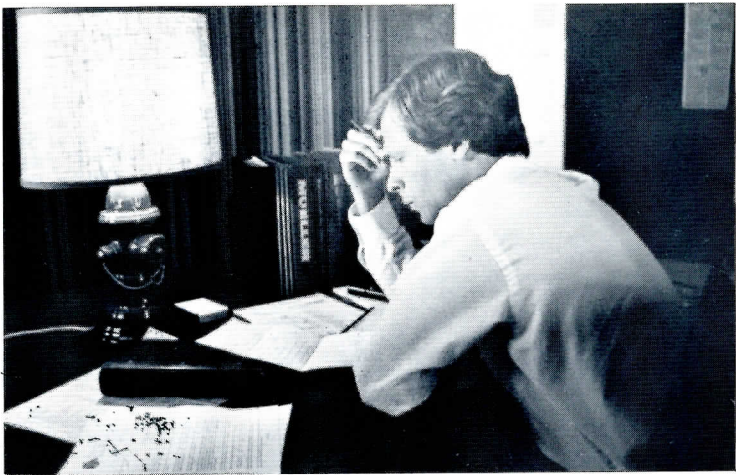
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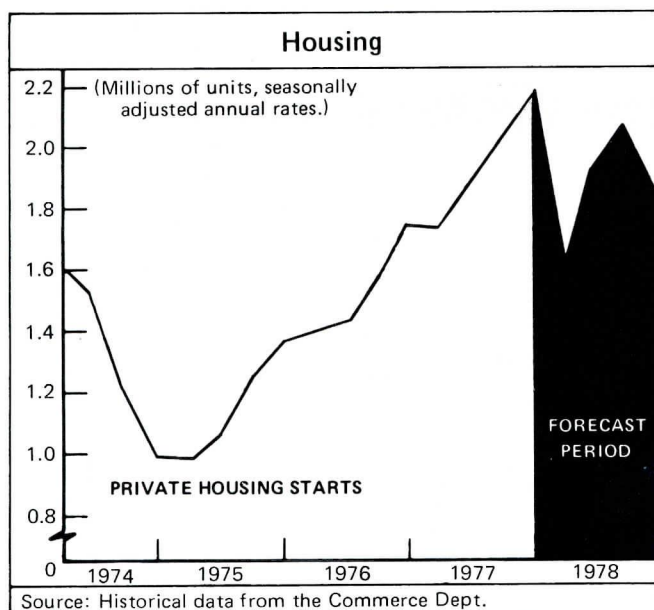
# Mueller Co. pays increased medical benefits and premiums

Over \$600,000. That's the increase in premiums and direct benefits for employees that Mueller Co. paid in 1977. Total disbursements in 1977 were \$1,664,449, up from \$1,036,182, in 1976.

What does this mean to you and your family? It means that you

have extra money in your pay-check that doesn't get spent on medical expenses. In effect, you save money. It also means an extra margin of security for all of us — security in knowing that we'll be taken care of without worrying about paying major medical bills.

## The Housing Scene



Activity in the housing sector certainly did not run true to trend in the opening months of the year, according to *Industry Week* magazine. Due to January and February weather, starts in the first quarter were down

around an annual rate of 1.6 million. In March and April, the starts rebounded. Sizable advances are predicted for the next six months. In spite of this slight decrease, 1.87 million new starts are expected this year. □

## MUELLER CO. MEDICAL PLAN INCOME AND EXPENDITURES YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 1977

### RECEIPTS:

Payments by Mueller Co. .... \$1,664,449

### DISBURSEMENTS:

#### Payments for Benefits:

Weekly Indemnity Payments ..... \$ 165,671  
Doctors, Hospitals and  
Other Medical Costs ..... 1,337,993  
Total Benefits Paid ..... \$1,503,664

#### Insurance Premiums Paid to Republic

National Life Insurance Co. for  
Life and Accidental Death and  
Dismemberment Coverages ..... 122,056  
Service Fee to Self-Insurers  
Service, Inc. .... 38,729  
Total Disbursements ..... \$1,664,449

### Balance Sheet

as of September 30, 1977

### ASSETS: None

Benefits for medical and doctors' expenses are paid from the general assets of the sponsor, Mueller Co.

Life and accidental death and dismemberment benefits are insured with Republic National Life Insurance Company.

### LIABILITIES:

The only liabilities are the amounts for claims in process and which were incurred prior to September 30, 1977.

The above statement shows only cash receipts and payments. It does not include amounts for claims in process at the end of the year. Payments for benefits are paid as claims are submitted and approved. Insurance premiums are paid monthly. The plan does not operate from an established fund.

There were no party-in-interest transactions, no loans, obligations or leases in default. The statement of receipts and disbursements includes all transactions.

Those participating in the plan and their beneficiaries can obtain a copy of the

plan's annual report filed with the Internal Revenue Service and the Department of Labor for \$1.00 from the plant personnel department. A copy of the report may be examined at any of the company's personnel offices without charge.

Booklets describing the coverages and benefits in detail have previously been distributed to all employees. Extra copies are available without charge from any of the company's personnel offices.

Other documents are available from the plan administrator by specific request. □

### Plan Administrator

Robert W. Mallow, Secretary-Treasurer  
Mueller Co.  
500 West Eldorado St.  
Decatur, Illinois 62525  
Telephone 217-423-4471

**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