

the Westerner

Omaha Works
January, 1982



Pulling together—Page 4

for your information

The committee planning this year's Omaha Works' observance of National Engineers Week Feb. 21 through 27 has lined up a couple of special guest speakers. The observance traditionally is held around the time of the birthday of George Washington, who is acknowledged as the father of engineering.

The president of Western Electric, Donald E. Procknow, will speak in the auditorium to a gathering of Works technical professionals and supervisors on Feb. 25. On Feb. 26, Nebraska's Sen. Edward Zorinsky will talk to the group.

Other speakers are scheduled during activities throughout the week, including an engineer who worked on the space shuttle program. A plant tour at the Works for the approximately 200 techs and their families also is planned.

"Engineers pioneering America's revitalization" is the theme for this year's Engineers Week . . .

. . . Two members of accounting Dept. 333 have earned the designation of certified management accountant, or CMA. Mary Baker and John True are the only Works employees so certified.

The designation signifies a degree of professionalism in private accounting practices. To earn it, Mary and John had to pass rigorous tests administered nationally. All together, the portions of the test — which didn't have to be taken in one sitting — took 2½ days to complete.

It took from three to four months of intensive studying to prepare for the tests, John noted. The designation can be renewed every three years by taking six hours of graduate studies.



GETTING ACQUAINTED . . . Assembler Charlotte Kelly of Dept. 441 was one of the first employees to meet Bill Warwick when he toured the shops. Engineering and manufacturing manager Richard Iaffaldano (center) is explaining features of a new Works project, the 945A1 cutter presser.

Warwick heads Works

Although he wasn't officially the new general manager of the Omaha Works until Jan. 1 of this year, William J. Warwick had a chance to meet with employees and retired employees in December during a visit here. He dined with retired Works employees attending an annual Christmas luncheon, and toured shop areas afterward.

Formerly the general manager of the Montgomery Works in Aurora, Ill., Warwick succeeds Charles R. Meetsma, now general manager of the Allentown Works in Pennsylvania.

He began his career with Western Electric in May 1958 as a staff trainee in the defense activities division in Burlington, N.C. Later assignments brought him to production control at Bell Laboratories in Whippany, N.J., and to New York company headquarters to work in government relations.

After participating in the company's management training program in 1968,

he advanced to various management positions, including manager of SAFE-GUARD and Nike X projects contracting at headquarters. In December 1979, he became director of operations and regional services for the Northeastern Region of Bell Sales-East, a post he held prior to going to the Montgomery Works.

The new general manager earned a bachelor of science degree in business administration from the University of North Carolina and a master of business administration degree from Northwestern University.



Mary Baker



John True



William J. Warwick

**the
Westerner**

VOL. 26

NO. 1

**Linda Ryan
Editor**

Published for employees of the Omaha Works.
For information write: Editor, *The Westerner*,
P.O. Box 37000, West Omaha Station, Omaha,
Nebraska 68137 or telephone 691-3553

Member

IABC/Omaha

International Association of Business Communicators
Printed by the Omaha Works
Reproduction Department



Western Electric

service anniversaries

january

35 years

P. W. Challgren	282	1/8
G. E. Rosness	730	1/2
C. E. Schroeder	723	1/24
L. W. Stevenson	253	1/6

30 years

J. J. Lash	287	1/25
------------	-----	------

25 years

D. M. Ahrens	411	1/7
C. E. Blanchard	723	1/21
B. K. Bornman	435	1/28
L. P. Brown	361	1/5
C. F. Crawford	746	1/16
J. M. Drinnin	723	1/13
A. W. French	439	1/10
N. J. Goeser	413	1/7
N. G. Grant Jr.	475	1/3
J. R. Harper	413	1/15
C. J. Hughes	331	1/2
C. R. Hughes	524	1/28
W. G. Jones	744	1/21
R. L. Knutson	362	1/21
E. F. Krumel	741	1/30
R. J. Laux Jr.	300	1/30
R. J. Madsen	745	1/28
W. C. Neal	441	1/9
R. F. Oglevie	745	1/7
C. J. Orsi	746	1/7
C. G. Rehberg	741	1/14
R. L. Schutt	728	1/21
A. J. Simpson	252	1/28
J. Slosser Jr.	282	1/28
J. B. Smith	439	1/13

V. G. Tingwald	510	1/28
C. C. Tompsett	746	1/2
L. D. Wenstrand	732	1/2

20 years

N. A. Curto Jr.	725	1/24
G. D. Ellwanger	252	1/22
E. W. Fetherkile	441	1/24
R. J. Mehck	745	1/18
D. J. Michel	723	1/9
L. H. Noble	441	1/21
B. L. Panowicz	437	1/29
D. C. Schultz	725	1/22
D. W. Widtfeldt	361	1/18
S. D. Wolkins	746	1/22
D. H. Young	723	1/17

15 years

R. J. Anderson	745	1/16
R. B. Ballantine	331	1/9
R. F. Cubrich	725	1/17
D. Garcia	725	1/17
G. W. Hightshoe	725	1/16
M. T. Jaeger	741	1/30
J. H. Larkin	728	1/31
R. J. Lukowski	411	1/23
M. R. Payne	435	1/6

10 years

M. C. Chard	445	1/26
S. M. Christiansen	443	1/21
N. S. Mentzer	253	1/26
P. F. Wentz	728	1/10
V. H. Winnicki	439	1/2

Readers, help!

An Omaha woman is trying to find the young woman in her 20s who helped her daughter when her car skidded off the road into a ditch at about 120th and Maple streets on Jan. 15. The windchill was 69 degrees below zero and there are no houses in the area where one could have obtained help.

The woman thinks the helper was a Western Electric employee on her way to work for the third shift. The accident occurred at about 10:30 p.m. and the employee and her companion drove the woman's daughter home, some distance out of the way.

The shaken daughter couldn't remember the name of the employee, so her mother has asked help in locating the good samaritan so she can thank her personally. If you are or know of this person, call Linda Ryan on Ext. 3553.

energy...

less is more



BY SIMPLY turning the switch to "off" on the plastic dryers in molding Dept. 437 on weekends, the Omaha Works will be ahead by more than \$15,000 in a year's time. Phil Traynor of Dept. 745 and Mickey Owens of Dept. 437 turned in that idea as a joint suggestion and each received \$505 from the employee suggestion program. The Works uses about 60 plastic dryers in manufacturing connectors. Phil and Mickey's suggestion is a perfect example of how an energy-saving idea, no matter how seemingly uncomplicated it may be, can have big energy- and cost-cutting results.

BSSP/SSP results

The following are the October (first figures listed) and November (second figures listed) unit values for both the Bell System Savings Plan (BSSP) and the Savings and Security Plan (SSP) for non-salaried employees:

	BSSP			SSP	
	Units Value	Units Credited Per Dollar		Units Value	Units Credited Per Dollar
AT&T (Oct.)	2.6909	.3716	AT&T (Oct.)	1.2567	.7957
(Nov.)	2.7516	.3634	(Nov.)	1.2848	.7782
Government Obligations	2.4691	.4049	Guaranteed Interest Fund	1.2986	.7700
Equity Portfolio	2.5588	.3908		1.3100	.7633
	1.8501	.5405			
	1.9201	.5208			
Guaranteed Interest Fund	1.2049	.8298			
	1.2160	.8223			

Taking care of business

It's time to quit feeling sorry

An editorial appeared a few months ago in the employee publication of Western Electric's Hawthorne Works in Chicago. Although it was written for the people at Hawthorne, it addressed issues affecting Western Electric employees at all locations across the country.

In light of recent developments, perhaps the editorial's message is even more applicable. On January 8, 1982, the Department of Justice announced it was dropping its 7-year-old antitrust case against the Bell System, and AT&T agreed to divest those parts of the 22 Bell System operating companies that provide local exchange or local access service (see story on Page 8).

The following are excerpts taken from the editorial written by Marifrank DeHarb, editor of The Microphone at the Hawthorne Works:

I think it's time we stopped feeling sorry for ourselves . . .

We want it to be like the good ol' days when Hawthorne was teeming with people and business.

We're tired of watching our work force decline with many of us doing jobs formerly done by two or more people. We're tired of losing products (to other WE factories).

Gosh! We are tired!

But, in plain English, if we want Hawthorne to survive, we . . . have to pull together and get the job done.

We face enemies today. Inflation and a sagging economy are known enemies that are threatening us directly as individuals. They're also threatening our livelihoods by threatening our business.

But, there are other things that we are perceiving as enemies when we should, perhaps, be looking upon them as opportunities.

Those are new technology and increased competition, and the restructuring of this vast business we call the Bell System.

We can be excited about the new technology, so much of which we have contributed to through our own engineering

innovation. It gives us an opportunity to learn and grow and improve our society.

We can welcome the challenge because we know we're the best.

And, while we don't yet know how we'll be affected when the restructuring (of the Bell telephone companies) is completed, we shouldn't be afraid of the unknown. Chances are it too will mean many new opportunities for us.

I think we have a choice. We can cling to our daily routines until they become ruts of monotony and discouragement. Or, we can make a dedicated decision to be attentive to opportunities:

. . . opportunities to find better ways to do our individual jobs.

. . . opportunities to gather and study information about the newest tools and methods to perform the work we're doing.

. . . opportunities to introduce efficiencies, improved quality and better service in the jobs we do.

That's how the Japanese workers turned their industries around. Japanese workers' personal interest and suggestions for making their products and services the best is exactly what changed the words "Made in Japan" from an embarrassment to a symbol of quality and technological sophistication.

It's going to take labor and management working together to make a healthy

business and preserve jobs. Let's take the opportunities that lie ahead. Together.

Like Hawthorne, we at the Omaha Works have experienced extensive belt tightening and some layoffs within the last couple of years. Developments in recent weeks indeed have brightened AT&T's business outlook. But let's not kid ourselves into thinking the years ahead will be easy.

There's no question that new technology and increased competition — mentioned in the Hawthorne editorial — lie ahead. But while the door to more opportunities has been opened, let us remember that many of us will have to learn new jobs and skills to accommodate growth and change. We also must bear in mind that inflation and a sagging economy still threaten to drain our energies as working people as well as consumers.

So, you see, while these may not be the "good ol' days," they're exciting days, to say the least. Our challenges may be bigger than ever, but so are our opportunities.

That's why we have no time to feel sorry for ourselves. There's too much work to be done. We must be diligent in confronting these challenges, and we must act according to the key to the Hawthorne editorial message . . . "together."

Cost reduction posse beats 01

Dodge City hasn't seen the likes of a posse as successful as the one that rounded up the bad guys in the 1981 cost reduction campaign at the Omaha Works.

If you will recall, last year's "Gun-smoke" skit performed on the auditorium stage before a gathering of Works technical-professional personnel was a cliff-hanger. Would Larry "Hat" Lewallen and his engineering staff posse be able to raise \$11 million in cost reductions to defeat the likes of competition bandits, productivity swindlers, Chief Rising Cost and the technology stampede?

In fact, the posse achieved \$11,280,000 in savings during 1981, and the stars of the skit returned to the stage to show

how the bad guys had been sentenced to hang.

After the skit, general manager Bill Warwick presented awards to the following for their part in cutting Works costs in 1981:

—Organization 700. 1981 was the third year in a row this group reached its greatest percentage of its goal (107 percent) for a total of \$4,617,500 in savings.

—Dept. 273. This department saved \$1,418,800, making 1981 the seventh year in eight years the department's savings have amounted to more than \$1 million.

—Dept. 274. The department's savings amounted to \$1,012,400.

—Dept. 472. By saving \$1,685,700,

Quality of work life efforts begin

A quality of work life (QWL) steering committee has been formed at the Omaha Works. Its efforts are geared at increasing employee participation in decisions affecting their daily work and working environment.

The concept is one which has been successful within the industrial complexes of Japan, and has been gaining popularity in the United States, noted Gene Tingwald. Gene is a member of the steering committee comprised of management and union representatives. Other members are Bob Dunn, Mike Quinlan, Ed Arnone, Harlan Clark, Marlene Wilson, Herb Rhodes and Bob Alberts.

The goals of the QWL efforts are (1) to employ people in a profitable and efficient enterprise and (2) to create fulfilling working conditions by providing opportunities for employees and groups at all levels to influence their working environment.

An important step in fulfilling these goals is the creation of quality circles,



FIRST QUALITY CIRCLE . . . A training room is the site of weekly meetings of the Works' first quality circle consisting of (clockwise, from left) Bill Cianciolo, Ike Jones, Steve Nosal, Tom McNulty (facilitator), Fred Chadwick (resource person), Ron Hassler, Lloyd Reed and circle leader Jim Allen. Not pictured is Dave Hochstein.

small groups of employees who have volunteered to meet regularly to define problems and explore solutions. The first such circle at the Works has been formed and consists of seven hourly employees from Dept. 411, representing receiving, trucking, storage and shipping areas.

Led by Jim Allen, the circle includes Bill Cianciolo, Ron Hassler, Dave Hochstein, Ike Jones, Steve Nosal and Lloyd Reed. Here's how it works:

Meeting for one hour once a week during working hours, circle members identify and assign priority to problems affecting their particular work. The problems are presented for QWL steering committee approval before solutions are pursued.

Among problems this "pilot" quality circle has defined are those regarding safety, which can jeopardize an employee's well-being and hamper job efficiency. Input from employees not in the circle is welcomed — and encouraged — at all times, said leader Jim Allen.

Circle members, who have been meeting for less than two months, still are doing their homework on problem-solving techniques and other skills to help them function as a group. Training direction is given by "facilitator" Tom McNulty of Dept. 362, who is helping get the circle started. Also, at the invitation of circle members, section chief Fred Chadwick (Dept. 411) has been attending meetings as a "resource person."

The work involved in a quality circle is "something you just don't jump into and do right away," one circle member noted. Each member is learning as they proceed, dealing with questions an innovative program can present.

All agree, however, that the concept has great potential to positively affect working conditions.

Jim summed up the circle's commitment: "If management is willing to let employees provide input, then we ought to at least give it a try."

1 billion goal

this department attained the highest departmental savings for the Works in 1981.

—Dept. 476. Savings for 1981 amounted to \$1,206,800.

—Dept. 751. With \$1,511,311 in savings for 1981, this department has made a million dollar achievement level an annual event.

—Dept. 753. This department realized \$1,546,278 in savings.

—Dept. 755. Savings amounted to \$1,242,762.

After the general manager presented the awards, he stepped up to the stage to turn on an oversized "TV set" so all could watch the "Super Bowl for Savings" game between the Cost Reduction

Giants and the Big Money Stealers.

Giants quarterback Crazy Legs Lewallen appeared for a pre-game interview. The Stealers will be a tough foe in the Giants' bid to attain another \$11 million in cost reductions in 1982, he said, but leading the Giants' team are several tough guys, too: Hustling (George) Henderson, (Ken) Stasiak the Streak, (Ralph) Beisner the Bruiser, Rushin' (George) Rosness, Super (Graham) Seiter, Rocky (Herb) Rhodes and Big Foot (Mark) Foster.

What will be the final score in the Giants vs. the Stealers game? Viewers were told to stay tuned for the Super Bowl for Savings wrapup in 1983.

Shop talk

Five-pair connector meets market needs

It's small and rather plain looking. But looks can be deceiving.

The new 710 five-pair connector, which the Omaha Works has been manufacturing in Dept. 435 since the fourth



TEAMWORK . . . Shirley Peterson, a layout operator in Dept. 435, uses a 945A1 cutter presser to wire a test module of a 710 five-pair connector. Layout operator Larry Duros helps assemble the cutter presser in Dept. 441.

quarter of last year, has features which should meet the demands of the market.

The new connector system is used in situations in which small pair size cable splicing is required. It's an addition to the 710 connector family. The Works has been making a 710 25-pair connector for about six years.

The 710 five-pair connector is ideal for splicing service wire and drop wire, and in aerial repairs, transfers and underground plant applications. Like the 710 25-pair connector, it permits splicing conductor wires without stripping the insulation. It also has the same wire-holding capability and moisture resistance as the 25-pair connector.

That's not all. The new connectors are available in three different "types." The splice connector type is used for quick and easy splicing. The reusable bridge connector type allows additions and rearrangements without disturbing the original splice. The half-tap connector type allows contact to be made without service interruption.

These are the kinds of features customers appear to want, noted Tom Blair of Dept. 742, a senior engineer assigned to the connector job. Marketing research conducted by Western Electric led to the development of the 710 five-pair connector system.

About 50 operating employees currently are involved in the assembly and molding work required to manufacture the new connectors. Eventually that number could grow to about 75 employees.

The 710 five-pair connectors and the 710 25-pair connectors are two of several connectors manufactured only

by the Omaha Works location for Western Electric. The Works also makes 108, 109, 110 and 711 connectors.

Along with the new five-pair connectors, the Works also manufactures a special tool in Dept. 441 to install them — the 945A tool. It can be used to splice not only five-pair connectors, but 25-pair connectors as well.

The tool comes in a compact carrying case which includes a 945A1 cutter presser. The cutter presser weighs less than a pound and attaches easily to one's belt. It's handy to use when buried cables or vaults force splicing in cramped spaces, and is ideal for making small repairs in the field. Features like these are time — and cost — savers, which are important in a competitive market.

* * *

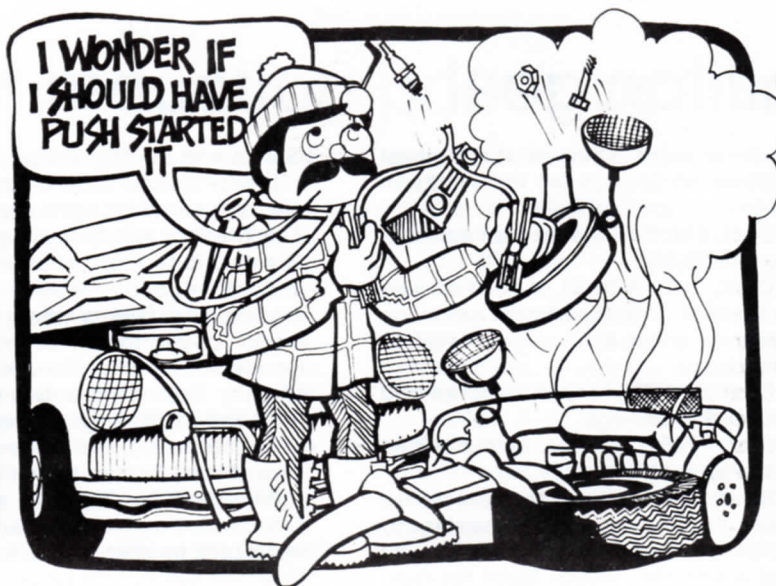
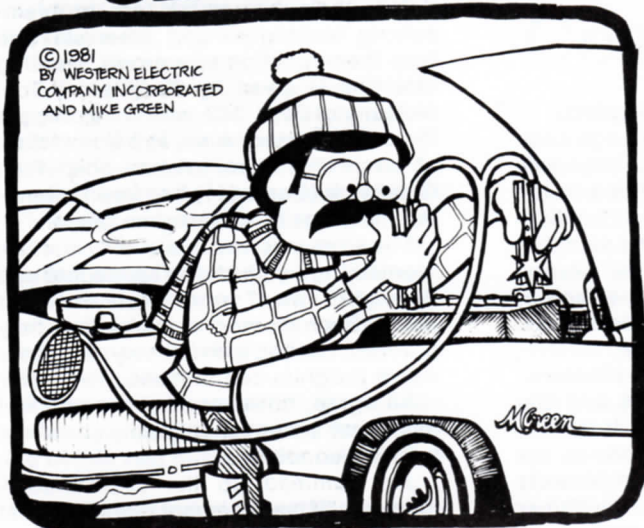
Load coil people fill big order

How do you handle a 1600-pound load coil case?

"With difficulty," said Mike Szymanski, a senior engineer in Dept. 746.

Mike and a crew of employees in Dept. 444 completed a special order last month for four of the largest load coil cases ever manufactured at the Omaha Works. Each contained 4200 load coils and two attached 4200-pair cables. Individually, the load coil cases weighed 1600 pounds and required four people, an electric truck operator and a crane operator to move them out for shipping.

OLLIE OOPS



The most common load coil case size made at the Works contains 900 coils, requiring just one person and a crane operator to move them. An 1800-coil load coil case was the previous largest case made here. The purpose of load coils is to restore the transmission quality of pairs over long distances to counter capacitance build-up.

Not only were the 4200-coil load coil cases cumbersome to handle, but they

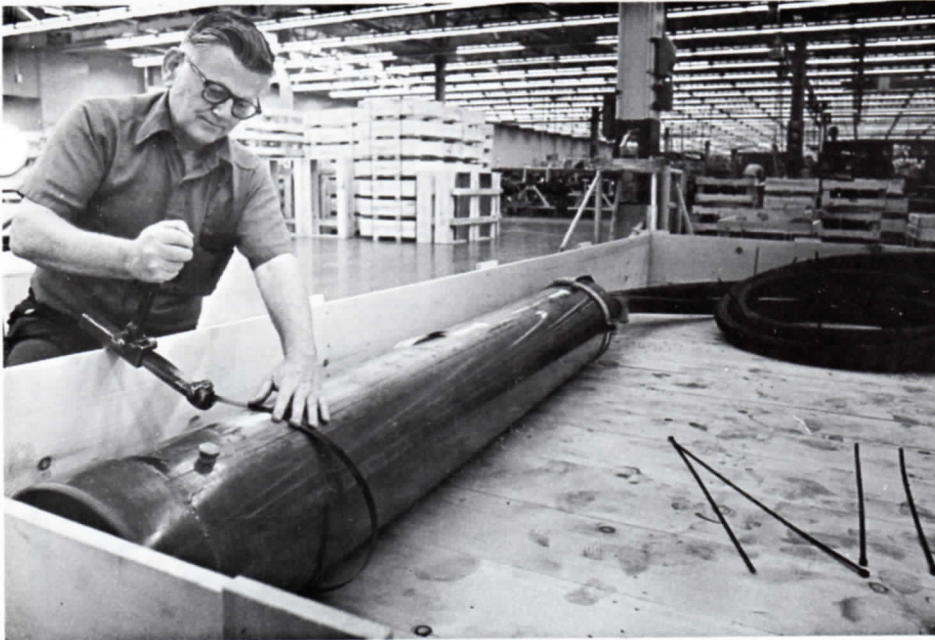
also required a change in manufacturing plans. "We had to find a different way of wiring them, because this was the first time we were attaching two cables" to the load coil case, Mike said.

Additional training was required for the eight operating employees working on the cases because of changed procedures and the use of different materials.

Because of the large number of coils

to be contained, large polyvinylchloride pipe (PVC pipe often used for sewer work) formed the shell. Polyethylene shells normally are used in assembling other Works load coil cases.

It took six weeks to provide Southwestern Bell with the load coil cases it needed for a large underground feeder system in Houston, Texas. It was a rush order, but the deadline was met.



COLOSSAL COIL CASE . . . Bud Clark, a packer in Dept. 444, pitched in to make sure the 1600-pound load coil cases reached Southwestern Bell safely.



LOTS A WIRE . . . Wireman Lorraine Haverman of Dept. 444 had her hands full wiring 4200-pair cable attached to a special-ordered load coil case.

Follow these tips to avoid back pain

If you're a gymnast in training for the 1984 Olympics, stop reading. The following probably doesn't apply to you.

But if you're among the majority of Americans who have sedentary lifestyles, something is happening to your back that's apt to cause you some grief sooner or later.

A sedentary life weakens the support muscles that aid the back in maintaining an upright position. The result can be back ache. But there are steps you can take to prevent the occurrence or recurrence of back pain. The Works medical department offers the following reminders on ways to avoid back aches:

Exercise. Now don't cringe. Sure, exercise can be a bore to most people, but the truth remains that exercising is the first step you should consider if you're serious about strengthening your back. Generally, any exercise that

strengthens body muscles also helps the back. Most specific back exercises emphasize strengthening the abdominal muscles to aid the "front line" of defense against a sagging back.

Many different exercise programs are available, and most will work if you adhere to them faithfully. However, among the best of back exercises — if you can tolerate it — is doing sit-ups with knees bent.

Learn proper lifting and bending. Most of you already are aware that bending and lifting from the waist are bad for the back. Instead, use your knees for bending, and keep heavy objects as close to your body as possible while lifting.

Maintain proper posture. Remember how Mom used to tell you repeatedly, "Stand up straight — don't slouch?" Maybe she overdid it, but most experts agree she had a point.

Sleeping posture also is important. It's best to avoid sleeping on your stomach. Sleeping on your side or back is preferred. A good mattress can help, too. Look for one that is firm — but not hard.

Finally, high heels may be fashionable, but they take their toll on the back. Wearing high heels throws the body forward, so you compensate by curving your spine to stand "straight." That puts needless strain on the lower back.

Lose excessive weight. This may sound like a stock answer to many physical ailments, not just back pain, but it really does make sense. Excessive weight — especially abdominal overhang — puts extra strain on your back. Get rid of it.

While the above steps won't eliminate all back aches, the medical department notes, they should at least alleviate the incidence of attacks and help you avoid back surgery. That's not a bad trade-off.

Department of Justice drops suit

Hardly a day goes by without some reference made to it in the news media. "It" is the history-making news of Jan. 8, 1982, when it was announced that the Department of Justice was dropping its 7-year-old antitrust case against AT&T and that AT&T agreed to a government-proposed modification to the existing 1956 Consent Decree.

The terms of the modified decree require that AT&T divest those parts of the 22 Bell System operating companies that provide local exchange or local access service. A plan for the reorganization of the Bell System must be filed with the Department of Justice within six months of the effective date of the Consent Decree, with divestiture to occur at the end of an 18-month period.

All long-distance facilities will become a part of AT&T, which will continue to include Long Lines, Western Electric

and Bell Laboratories. AT&T will become responsible for all Bell System long-distance facilities, including those within the states. AT&T's access to the services of the divested local exchange companies would, under the decree, be on terms and conditions equal to other long-distance carriers. AT&T would retain ownership of customer premises equipment.

The agreement also provides for AT&T shareowners to retain their AT&T stock. However, they also will own proportionate values in the local exchange companies. Nothing in the accord as announced will change employee bargaining agreements now in force, wages, benefits, or pensions for Bell System employees.

Of significance in the agreement is that procurement practices of the local companies no longer will be at issue.

Supplies and equipment will be purchased from many sources, including Western Electric, not only in the existing competitive market, but at arm's length as well.

Western Electric President Donald E. Procknow termed the proposed Consent Decree modification "of vital importance to Western Electric and all of its employees and holds promise for a bright future for our business."

In a letter to all Western Electric employees, he stated that "we will be able to pursue the opportunities of an open market." He described the future as one of "stimulating challenge and enormous opportunity . . . Our heritage of over 100 years of Bell System service together with our engineering, manufacturing and service skills uniquely position us for the task ahead."

Seminars on retiring to be offered

What you don't know CAN hurt you.

In an effort to make sure that retirement poses as few problems and as little confusion as possible to employees, the Omaha Works will offer pre-retirement seminars on an ongoing basis beginning early this year.

Initially, employees 58 years old and up and their spouses will be invited to participate in the seminars, according to Bob Peterson, section chief of personnel and benefit services (Dept. 511). Based on a theme of "Looking ahead," the seminars will focus on financial and health concerns as well as other retirement-oriented topics.

The decision to offer the seminars stems from a realization that planning for retirement too often is an overlooked fact of life, Bob said.

"We prepare ourselves to take a job. On that job we continue to learn every day. But we do absolutely nothing in preparing for retirement," he explained. "Preparing to retire is at least as important — if not more so — as any other plans we've made in our lives."

Tentative plans call for the seminars to be conducted in two four-hour sessions. Employees will attend in groups of 15 or 20, plus any interested spouses. Sessions will be held during working hours, with special arrangements made to accommodate second-



REUNION . . . Retired Works employees braved icy road conditions to attend an annual Christmas luncheon in the Works' main cafeteria in December. Among them were Frank Havelka (clockwise, from left), Dick Mortensen, Wayne Hollingsworth, Glenn Miller and Curly Kaminski.

and third-shift employees.

The location for the seminars isn't definite, but "we want to have a relaxed and informal atmosphere that will encourage participation and discussion," Bob said. Works staff members and outside specialists in the fields of discussion will conduct the sessions.

Subjects to be addressed include medical and life insurance, death benefits, and changes affecting insurance depending on retirement age. Employees will learn how to apply for their pensions and what decisions must be made, as well as how retirees are

affected by company savings plans.

Health in retirement will be discussed, and guest speakers will talk about estate planning, wills and trusts, and Social Security benefits.

"On the second day of the seminar, we plan to have a combination luncheon and open discussion, with guest speakers and staff present," Bob said. "In all, we think this kind of program is a step forward and one which eventually will benefit all employees."

Employees eligible to take the seminars will receive letters of invitation when the program begins.