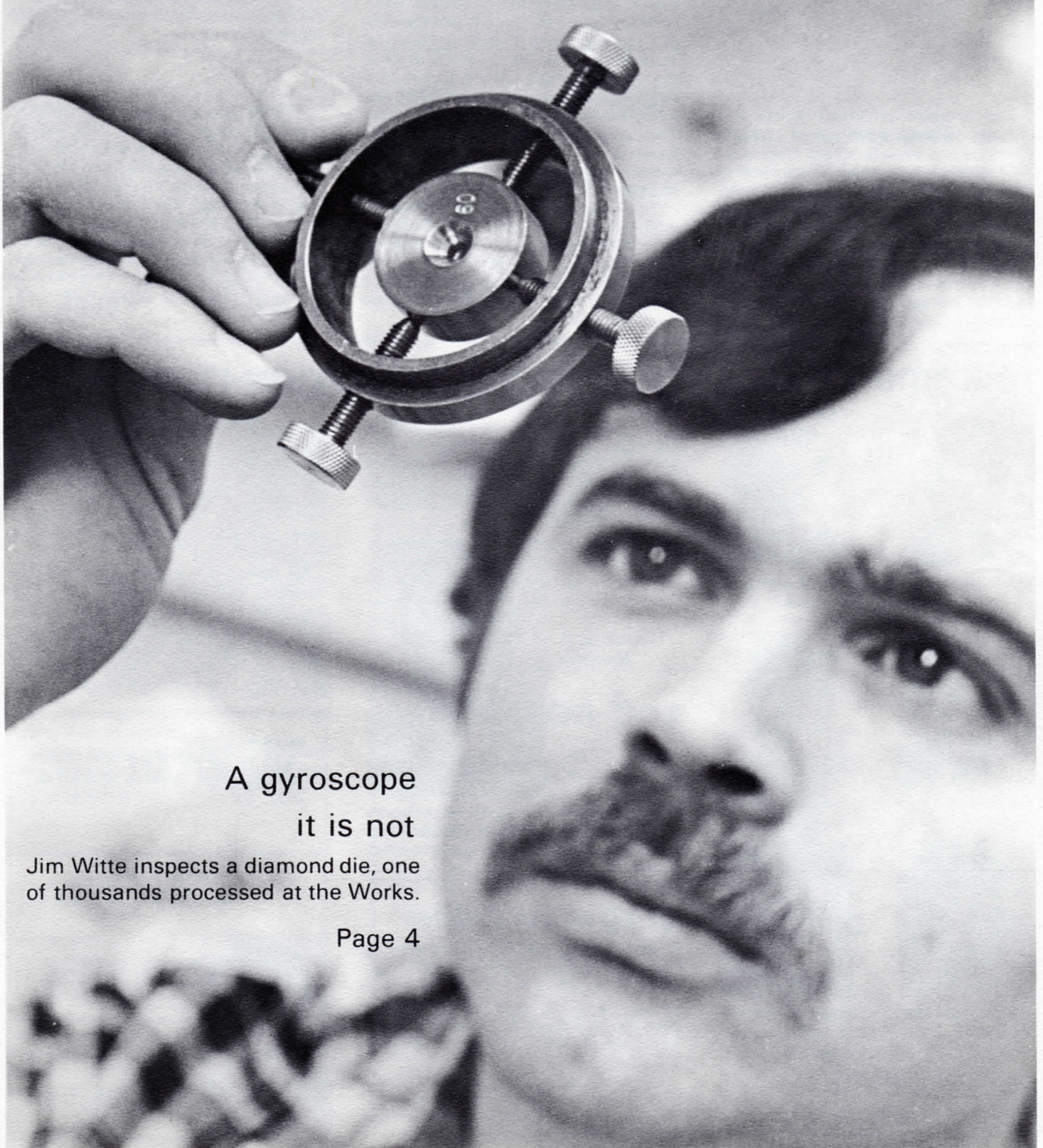


# the Westerner

Omaha Works

May 9, 1979



A gyroscope  
it is not

Jim Witte inspects a diamond die, one  
of thousands processed at the Works.

Page 4

# for your information

Two children of Omaha Works employees recently were named Western Electric Fund Merit Scholars. They qualified for the scholarships on the basis of their scores in National Merit Scholarship competition. They are Thomas Dockweiler, son of Danny Dockweiler of Dept. 282, and Kristine Petersen, daughter of Charles Petersen of Dept. 733. Thomas attends Nebraska Christian High in Central City, and Kristine is a student at Omaha's Westside High. Each

scholar will receive from \$500 to \$3,000 from the Western Electric Fund, to be used to further their education . . .

. . . Another Works employee has reason to be proud of his offspring, too. Karen Eskew, the daughter of Robert Whitcomb of Dept. 745, recently was featured in a monthly trade magazine, *Electrical Apparatus*. Karen, who used to work at the Omaha Works a few years back, now helps repair electric generators with Pokorny Electric Motor Service of Omaha. The magazine article mentioned how Karen is one of the service center's top winders working out of the shop. Her boss, Jack Pokorny, thinks Karen is the only woman — in this area, at least — who works out of town on generator jobs. She's been with Pokorny Electric since October and according to her boss, she can handle the job just as well as the men who traditionally have done the same work . . .

. . . If you haven't gotten into the baseball mood yet, you had better do so quickly before discounted tickets to the College World Series June 1 through 7 are gone. A book of general admission tickets regularly priced at \$24 are available for just \$15. If you have children age 12 and under, two may be admitted on one ticket. If you prefer reserved seat season tickets, those also may be purchased for \$27 each. Tickets may be bought in the WEOMA Club office or from WEOMA representatives . . .

. . . This year's in-plant U.S. Savings Bond campaign will be held May 7 through 18. Employees will receive information about how they can begin to buy bonds through the Payroll Savings Plan or increase the number of bonds they already are purchasing. If an employee wants to purchase bonds for a child, the child must have his or her own Social Security number. Chairman of this year's campaign is Dick Lee of Organization 720.

## retirements



Milo Kirwan  
26 years



Lorene Minkin  
22 years



Olive Mullens  
21 years



Anna Rustermier  
20 years



Lucille Coschka  
20 years



Marion Gillespie  
19 years

Not pictured:

Myrtle Loges  
20 years

## Meetsma assumes new post

The Omaha Works has a new general manager, Charles R. Meetsma. He succeeds Warren G. Corgan, who became vice-president of Western Electric's Government and Commercial Sales Division in Greensboro, N.C.



Charles R.  
Meetsma

Mr. Meetsma comes from the Northern Illinois Works in Lisle, where he was director of engineering and manufac-

turing. He began his career with Western 23 years ago as a planning engineer at Chicago's Hawthorne Works. He later transferred to Western's pilot plant in Columbus, Ohio, and was selected to participate in the company's management training program at headquarters in New York City.

Mr. Meetsma is a graduate of the University of Michigan, where he earned a bachelor of science degree in industrial-mechanical engineering and a master of business administration degree. A native of Muskegon, Mich., he and his wife, Mary, have four children.

## Bring in your slides

There still is time to submit your 35 mm color slides to be considered for use as a color cover of the *Westerner*. Slides should be vertical and have a summertime theme. People engaged in summer activities or landscapes are welcome subjects.

Bring or send slides to Linda Ryan, public relations, Dept. 525, by May 25. Include name, department and phone number. All slides will be returned.

**the  
Westerner**  
VOL. 23 NUMBER 4

Linda Ryan  
Editor

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 **Western Electric**

# service anniversaries

## 20 years

L. K. Bahr  
M. J. Baird  
Z. B. Brazeel  
B. E. Bremer  
K. K. Coe  
L. B. Coschka  
S. F. Crum  
J. E. Curran  
L. W. Dean  
M. G. Domina  
D. W. Donze  
R. G. Erickson  
M. J. Gaggiano  
K. E. Glasshoff

G. L. Harlow  
L. L. Hawkins  
V. S. Hoffman  
D. L. Klebe  
R. E. Kobjerowski  
B. W. Kreger  
J. S. Laroche  
G. P. Lewis  
E. J. Liekhus  
R. T. Malone  
P. L. McAcy  
V. M. Mecseji  
F. D. Merrick  
R. L. Michaelson

M. D. Nord  
J. T. Riley  
D. D. Rowlett  
D. L. Rumph  
P. F. Snawerdt Jr.  
J. V. Sparck  
L. R. Stenneche  
H. M. Strong  
S. W. Struz  
G. E. Tharp Jr.  
D. C. Timmerman  
D. L. Todd  
G. M. Vanackeren  
T. A. Vice Jr.

G. M. Vomacka  
H. B. Weberg

## 15 years

C. M. Barber  
A. B. Cruz  
V. L. Larson  
A. Menks  
S. H. Moberg  
A. J. Wagstaff



Timm Timmerman  
35 years  
5/1/44



Bettie Shanahan  
25 years  
5/9/54

Not pictured:

Edward Schleiger  
35 years  
5/22/44

## 10 years

D. Z. Altic  
P. P. Amos  
J. L. Andersen  
L. P. Anthis  
S. P. Behrendt  
N. K. Bole  
E. H. Casteel  
E. W. Chandler  
M. W. Chollett  
L. P. Craig  
S. H. Davis  
K. A. Fink  
K. L. Fink  
M. W. Griff  
T. M. Hawkins Jr.  
K. C. Hunt  
D. G. Johnson  
L. H. Johnson  
N. W. Jones  
D. F. Kinnally Jr.

J. A. Knott  
K. H. Kowalewski  
D. W. Mahrt  
L. E. Malone  
P. F. Marino  
D. A. Martin  
A. E. Meier Jr.  
V. J. Millie  
V. S. Munch  
S. A. Petruilis Jr.  
L. F. Prochaska  
G. J. Rewolinski  
L. P. Robertson  
C. C. Roehr  
J. I. Sherry  
D. E. Taylor  
P. H. Tritsch  
T. M. Trometer  
D. L. Van Soelen  
Y. P. Yates

## And the mystery baby is . . .

There's just no fooling some people.

The "mystery baby" in the last issue of The Westerner was correctly identified by a number of Works employees, but only the first five to call in with the correct answer received souvenirs.

The baby was none other than this paper's editor, Linda Ryan. You didn't expect me to run a photo feature like that and not get into the fun, did you?

The first five employees to correctly name the mystery baby were Eleanor Hundt, Dept. 413; Georgia Daily, Dept. 361; Leo Ambrose, Dept. 746; John Mabry, Dept. 745; and Bill Love, Dept. 361. Each received one of three souvenirs of their choosing.

The guesses were varied. One contestant even called from Northwestern Bell. Most interesting is that everybody with

incorrect guesses thought the baby to be a boy. The majority of those in the wrong guessed photographer Rog Howard, but a few thought the baby to be manager Richard Iaffaldano and even former general manager Frank Lefebvre.

I'm not sure how I should take those guesses, but I do know I'll think twice about wearing jeans on the job. I wouldn't want you to confuse me with my co-worker, Rog.

## promotions

### Bill Shaflucas

From department chief, Dept. 251, to business planning manager at Morristown, N.J., reporting to the director of division staff of the Cable and Wire Division.



## suggestion box

Two recent recipients of suggestion awards like to think big, judging from the amounts of their awards.

Gerald Nick of Dept. 435 was awarded \$1,670 for his suggestion, and Doug Haase of Dept. 441 received \$1,495 for his idea. Together, their ideas will save the Works more than \$21,000 in a year's time.

Nick suggested that 710BB connector modules from Dept. 435 not be scrapped. Instead, they can be used by Depts. 441 and 443 for various electrical testing.

Haase proposed that a grinding operation may be eliminated by using a circular form tool to make guide pins on an automatic screw machine.

Other employees also received suggestion awards:



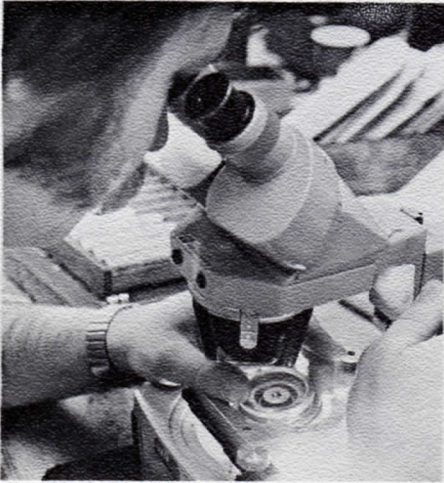
Gerald Nick



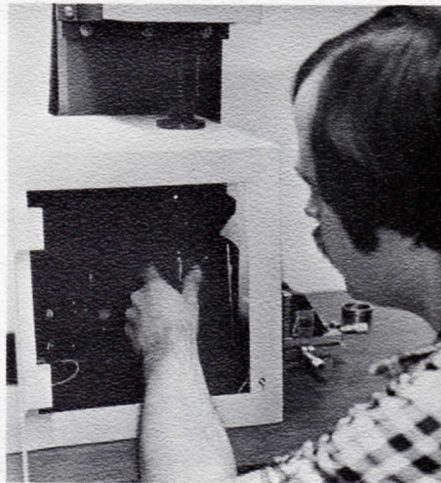
Doug Haase

James Black, Dept. 746, \$420.  
John Francavilla, Dept. 745, two awards: \$380, \$275.

Ronald Slattery, Dept. 251, \$280.  
Stan Svoboda, Dept. 252, \$130.  
Wayne Masek, Dept. 445, \$120.  
Delmar Dirks, Dept. 741, \$106.25.



**IN FOCUS . . .** Bob Belik, a layout operator in Dept. 251-7, uses a microscope to check a diamond die for wear.



**LASER OPERATOR . . .** Jim Witte positions a ring holding an unpierced die blank into the rotating fixture of the laser, so it's in the path of the laser beam.

# Die lab d the 'hole

Somewhere out there in the shops diamond dies are being used to draw down wire to a specified gauge. Approximately 3,700 such dies are in operation daily, with nearly four times as many being repaired or stored as standbys.

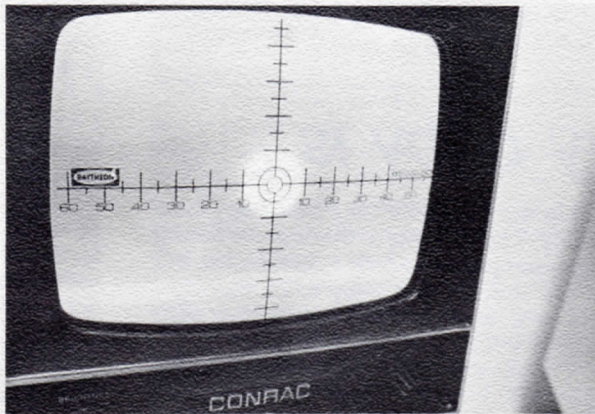
That puts the total of diamond dies in process on the Works' premises at about 18,500 — certainly no small matter when one considers the importance the dies play in the manufacture of quality products. Largely because precise dies are essential to plant operations, the Omaha Works has a whole laboratory devoted entirely to the fabrication, shaping and repair of diamond dies.

In fact, the Omaha Works is the only location to have a die lab operation so complete that a laser is used to pierce many of the diamond dies. The openings in the dies then are cone-shaped and finished to size either mechanically or ultrasonically.

Dies in machines throughout the shop are changed in sets about every two weeks, said Joe Grzywa, section chief overseeing die lab work in Dept. 251-7. The dies must be changed that often and brought in for recutting and reshaping because they get bigger with use, and the wire gauge would not be accurate.

**WITH MORE** than 3,000 diamond dies in use and changes made at two-week intervals, it's no wonder that the bulk of the die lab's work is reshaping used dies. The main lab, operational since the summer of 1977, is located in the lower level west side of Building 20. A satellite die lab — once the only die lab at the Works — is in the cable shop.

In addition to diamond dies, the die lab shapes to size the tungsten carbide dies



**WHAT'S ON? . . .** Before the laser beam actually pierces a die, the laser operator centers the die's diamond (white blob) via a TV-like screen.



**TEAMWORK . . .** Jane Phillips (foreground) reshapes a fine gauge die ultrasonically, while Judy DeVault polishes fine gauge dies on a wire lapper.

# oes thing

used in the No. 1 wire draw machines in the cable shop. (The lab doesn't use the laser to pierce a hole in the tungsten dies. Tungsten dies are bought pre-drilled and are shaped to size prior to use in the rod breakdown operation.)

Copper rod (wire) five-sixteenths of an inch in diameter is drawn through the No. 1 wire draw machines to produce 10, 12 and 13-gauge wire. That wire is used as supply for the central tin plater, exchange insulating lines and PVC lines. The insulating lines all use diamond wire-drawing dies, Grzywa said.

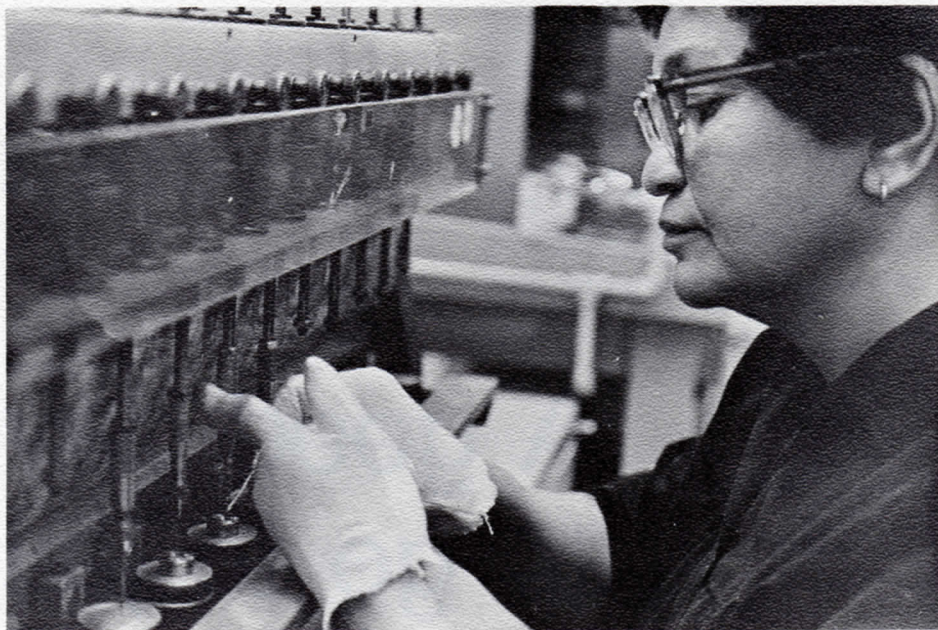
Some of the supply wire also goes to fine gauge wire operations in Building 30. The diamond dies used in those wire drawing machines are purchased ready-made from 30 gauge to 41 gauge.

In this way, good dies contribute to the production of quality wire. Having a good die is just as important as proper machine adjustments, good wire-drawing compound and raw material, Grzywa noted. The cone-shaped opening of the die must be precise "so that the wire goes through smoothly and breakage is minimized or eliminated," he said.

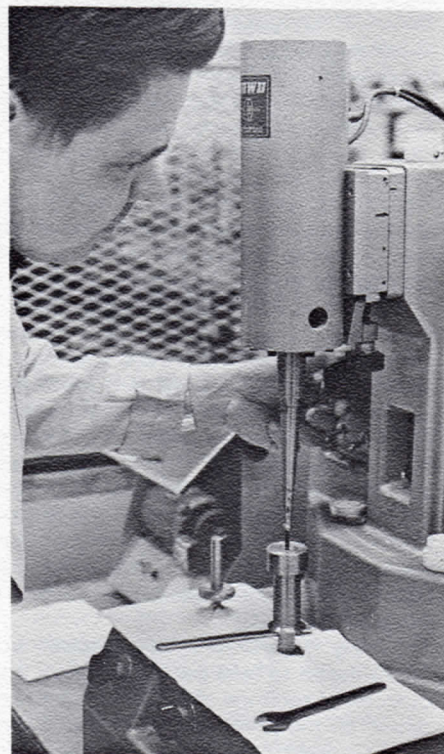
The Works uses both natural and synthetic diamond dies. Grzywa expects natural diamond dies eventually to become less available. Synthetic diamond dies not only are more wear-resistant, he said, but theoretically their supply is unlimited because they can be produced to meet a demand.

**THE 25 EMPLOYEES** in Grzywa's section are well aware of the importance of their work, he said, but perhaps none more than Jane Phillips, who has had 27 years' experience in die lab work.

(Continued on Page 7)



**LUBE JOB . . .** Pauline Smith applies a mixture of diamond powder and mineral oil (called a slurry) to a 12-spindle mechanical shaper.



**SHAPE-UP . . .** Don Schreiber fabricates ultrasonically a diamond die (gives it its cone shape) that has been pierced by a laser beam.



**CLEAN WAVE . . .** Sue Ellis cleans a die in an ultrasonic solution, part of the process involved in reshaping dies on an ultrasonic die processing machine.

# A good day to go to jail

What do you do on a balmy day in May?

You plant a garden . . . pitch a tent on a grassy slope . . . grab half-heartedly at a sailing Frisbee.

Or, you go to prison.

Unusual as that latter option may seem, tool and die maker Tom Schulte (Dept. 741) was to do just that the first weekend in May. He and about 30 other men would leave early on a Thursday and head for the Iowa State Prison at Fort Madison, where they would stay until Sunday night.

The men would conduct an interdenominational "cursillo" (Spanish for "short course"), a kind of retreat, for interested inmates. The men volunteer their time to conduct the cursillo in prison because it's something they believe in, and they hope to give help where help is needed.

In Tom's case, this is the third such trip he has made to the prison. He takes vacation time, packs a few belongings and bids goodbye to his wife and four children before leaving on the six-hour journey to Fort Madison.

Consider the time involved away from family and household duties — not to mention the inconvenience of the long trip — and one wonders why Tom and the others volunteer at all.

"I **REALLY** don't know why," Tom said, in mock bewilderment. "I'm basically kind of a lazy guy." "Lazy" by his definition apparently involves being active in numerous church activities, including Tom's recent ordination into the Catholic Church's diaconate. (Jerry Gau, also of Dept. 741, was ordained into the diaconate in the same ceremony.)

"I guess when you have an interest in certain things, you just find the time."

Tom himself made his first cursillo several years ago and had found it to be an enriching experience. When he

learned about a group interested in conducting cursillos at the Iowa prison as part of prison reform, he volunteered his assistance.

"The first time I went out to the prison I went out of curiosity more than anything else," Tom admitted. He had never been to a penitentiary. In fact, he had been of the opinion that inmates were "all animals" and that "we should lock them up and forget about them."

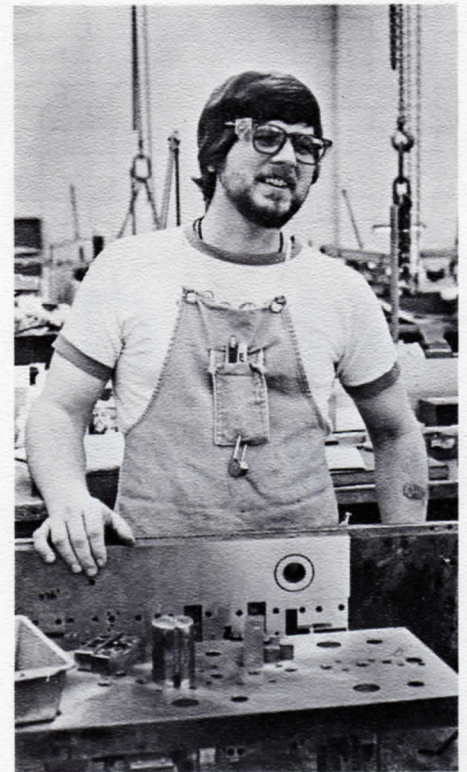
He came away from that first cursillo vowing never to return — but not for the reason one might expect. "It was so hard to leave those guys," Tom said, explaining that during the four-day retreat participants form a strong friendship bond. "You talk about more 'gut' things with them than you probably do with your friends outside the prison."

**BUT HE DID** decide to return for another cursillo a year later. Not even his fear of being inside the prison could change his mind.

"I do have some fear going in there," Tom said. "They lock that gate behind you and you know there are some guys in there who don't want you there because you're an outsider." The men conducting the cursillo sleep in minimum security quarters at night. Otherwise, they meet with inmates in both large and small groups during the daytime retreat hours. Guards are nearby, "but they have no guns on them," to avoid the possibility of a prisoner getting control of a weapon, he said.

During the cursillo, the inmates are encouraged to take part in an open discussion of feelings and ideals. Talks are based on the premise that in God's love for all creatures there is hope to overcome one's problems and to make something of one's life, Tom said.

"Basically, these men have had no contact with God. I have found men there who have never been loved and



A "LAZY GUY"? . . . Tom Schulte's actions speak otherwise.

most have been disowned by their families. People on the outside hate them, and inside there's a kind of a code that says they can't show any 'weakness' such as normal human traits of caring for one another," he said.

The idea of the cursillo is to "let them dump on you . . . listen to them and show them that you care. Probably for the first time in their lives they're able to talk about things that really matter to them." In this way, a door may be opened that will help an inmate to make necessary changes in his life.

"I know they come to a cursillo not so much to 'get religion' as to have a change in their routine," Tom said. He believes, however, that once the inmates get involved in the cursillo, they do get something out of it. Participants express their views about the cursillo before it ends, and "I've never heard anyone say he didn't like it." From 40 to 50 inmates out of about 900 in the prison now sign up for cursillos, he added.

"**SOMETIMES** I question my own motives" for participating in the prison cursillos, Tom said. He wonders if he's being sincere by offering his friendship for a few days before he returns to the free world. There doesn't seem to be enough follow-up on the new friends he has made, he said, although he makes an attempt to correspond by letter with a

(Continued on Page 7)

# Dies better today, take less time

(Continued from Page 5)

Looking back over changes that have occurred, she thinks the introduction of the laser and ultrasonic die processing machines has made production "a lot easier" to keep up with the demand for quality dies.

Early in her die lab career, holes in dies were drilled mechanically by using a steel pin, diamond dust and mineral oil. Dies were finished or polished to size with a rough driller. Later, wire lappers were introduced to help polish the cone-shaped openings, and eventually the pins to drill holes were standardized. This latter improvement meant that the pins were precut, eliminating having to sharpen them by hand. It assured that the angles in the cone-shaped opening in all dies were identically shaped, important if wire is to run smoothly without breaking.

It could take a week just to make one die, Phillips said, "and sometimes a die just wouldn't clean out or finish right — i was frustrating."

**TODAY**, the "needle of light" of a laser opens up a diamond die at Omaha's lab a process developed in 1965 with the assistance of three Western Electric engineers. Grzywa was one of those engineers.

After a hole has been pierced, an ultrasonic die processing machine gives the hole its cone shape, and finishes the hole to size in larger gauge dies. Wire lappers are used to finish a hole to size in smaller dies.

Ultrasonics — high-frequency waves — "give a superior finish to the die in the shaping process," Grzywa said, compared to mechanical shaping. The die lab also still uses some apparatus for mechanical shaping.

The entire process of fabricating or reshaping dies has been shortened. "What used to take a week can be done within hours," Phillips noted.

And with all those dies to be reshaped at two-week intervals, the die lab can use all the extra time it can save.

## Bloodmobile visits

Get those sleeves rolled up! The Red Cross Bloodmobile is scheduled to be at the Omaha Works May 17 from 12:15 to 5:30 p.m., and May 18 from 6 a.m. to noon. After donors give their blood in the auditorium, they will be treated to refreshments.



## Spring party dressing

DRESSY, CASUAL OR IN-BETWEEN? The newest fashions whatever your lifestyle will be featured at this year's annual WEOMA spring party May 25 at the Holiday Inn, 72nd and Grover streets. "Friday Night Live" is the theme of the party which will include dinner, entertainment and dancing. A sampling of the clothes to be shown at the party is modeled by Lila Watkins (from left), Dept. 441; Genelle Rohe, Dept. 441; and Barbara Cherry, Dept. 335.

## Weekend spent in prison

(Continued from Page 6)  
few of the inmates.

"There's so much loneliness and suffering that goes on there. I'm not defending what these guys did, but it could be me in there, too."

In reality, the closest Tom ever came to a life similar to that of the inmates was when he was arrested for not having a safety sticker on his car. He was handcuffed by the police, fingerprinted, booked and locked behind bars until his

wife could raise his bail.

A laughing matter now, it wasn't such a pleasant experience then. Yet, Tom knew that people would care enough about him to help him out of his predicament. Inmates at the lowa prison are not so fortunate, he said.

"You know, people say that we don't give them stiff enough sentences. I don't know about that. But what if he were your brother? I don't think you'd want him locked up and forgotten, either."

# More than communication gained

What began as a friendly chat on the occasion of an employee's 10th service anniversary has resulted in greater independence for 12 hearing impaired persons at the Omaha Works.

Alice Gilbert of Dept. 435, who is deaf, sat in Bob Dunn's office about one year ago. Through an interpreter (Kathy Fink of Dept. 445) she told him about some of the problems hearing impaired individuals were having on the job.

Deaf individuals have difficulty passing through the TV gates, because they cannot hear the buzzer signaling them to go through, she said. They also must rely on a third party to relay messages by telephone in emergencies, which often complicates the situation.

Bob Dunn looked into the matter. The problem at the TV gates was remedied



**INDEPENDENCE ...** Alice Gilbert (seated) demonstrates to Kathy Fink the use of the new teletypewriter in Building 42.

almost immediately. A light was installed at each of the gates, which flashes on when an employee may pass. Also, employees with hearing impairments were issued special passes identifying them, so that guards would be aware of the situation.

Resolving telephone communication problems took a little more doing. But through the persistent efforts of a number of people at the Works, a teletypewriter recently was installed in the fire and watch office in Building 42.

Instead of talking into and listening by telephone, a deaf person types a message on the teletypewriter's keyboard, said Fred Cottone of Dept. 733. Fred did much of the legwork involved in acquiring the machine. The message automatically types out on the teletypewriter of the person being called, who then types his response.

The machine is expensive for a private individual to buy, Fred said, and just five deaf employees of the Works have similar machines in their homes. However, the Works' machine may be used to relay a message to the Midlands Information and Referral Agency (MIRA), which is equipped with a teletypewriter. MIRA then delivers the message by conventional methods to the party for whom it is intended.

MIRA's services and the Works' teletypewriter are available on a 24-hour basis, Fred noted. Procedures for using the teletypewriter are being determined, but the machine may be used in the meantime.

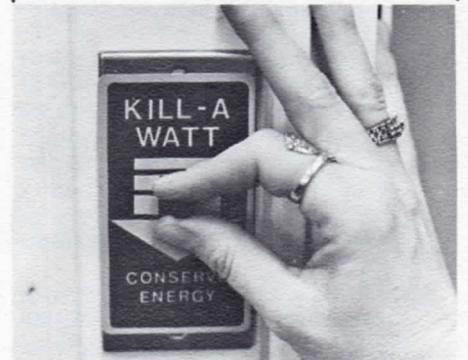
"We're very excited about it," said Alice Gilbert, expressing the feelings shared by all 12 of the Works' hearing

impaired employees.

To her, the installation of the machine means she won't have to miss any more rides home because of no means to communicate. She can be sure her message won't be misunderstood by a third party helping her, and her privacy won't be sacrificed.

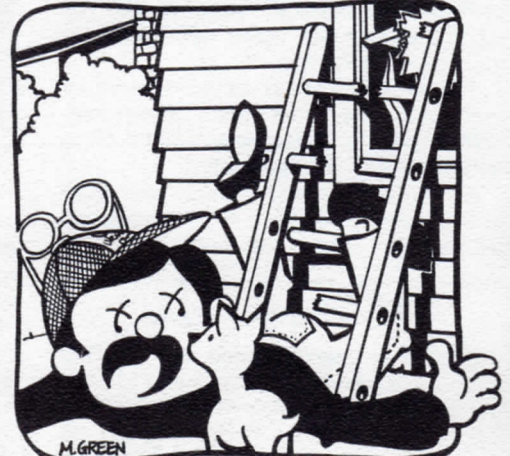
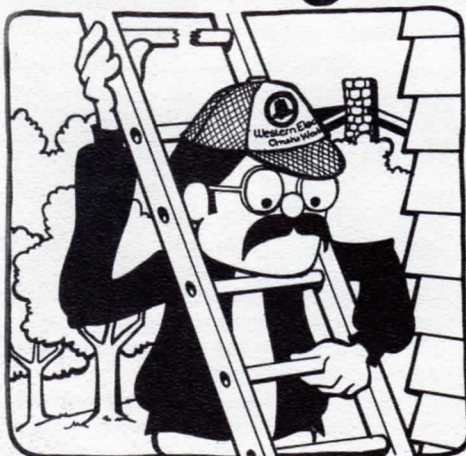
Best of all, she will be independent. "Now," she said, "I can be just like you."

**energy ...  
less is more**



**HOW WOULD YOU LIKE** to pay a power bill of \$200,000 a month? It's not unusual in a manufacturing plant the size of the Omaha Works to run up a power bill like that. In an effort to conserve energy, employees are being encouraged to turn off anything electrical throughout the Works where possible when it is not in use. As a reminder, black and orange "Kill-a-watt" decals have been affixed to some light switches in Works buildings. Kill-a-watt is a good practice to follow at home, too.

## OLLIE OOPS



Don't fall short of your spring spruce-up expectations.