

# the Westerner

Omaha Works

April, 1980



All is not quiet on the  
transportation front.

Page 4

# for your information

Would you be able to come up with a total figure of the earnings you've earned in a lifetime? Probably not.

The Social Security Administration, however, keeps a special lifetime earnings record for you at its headquarters in Baltimore, Md. Each year for as long as your work is covered by Social Security,

reports of your earnings are sent to Baltimore and recorded by computer.

The earnings are recorded by your name and Social Security number.

The earnings record is very important. When you or your family applies for benefits, your record will be checked to see if you worked long enough for benefits to be payable and to determine how much benefits will be.

Employer-reported wages are recorded dating back to 1937. Self-employment earnings are not recorded before 1951.

Starting with 1957, basic pay received while on active duty (or active duty for training) in the military service counts toward your Social Security protection. Also, for each quarter in which you have active duty pay after 1956, you receive

additional earnings credits of \$300 (\$1,200 yearly). These free credits do not appear on your earnings statement, but are considered in figuring monthly benefits.

If you were on active military duty at any time from Sept. 16, 1940, through Dec. 31, 1956, you may be eligible for special wage credits of \$160 for each month of service. When a benefits application is made, you or your survivors will be asked about this service. If these credits would result in a larger benefit, the Social Security representative will ask for a record of service.

Form 7004 for obtaining a statement of your earnings may be obtained from the WEOMA Club office or the financial office.

## Safety-toe shoe stops 700 pounds

It never fails.

Put on a brand new, scuff-free pair of shoes, and some joker happens by and purposely steps on your toes.

Rod Mach of Dept. 201 successfully avoided any pranksters for a full week after he began wearing a new pair of work boots. What he failed to avoid, however, was a 700-pound falling loading dock plate.

Luckily for Rod, he was wearing company-issued, safety-toe shoes with metatarsal guards. The shoes are required on Rod's job out on the docks of Building 50.

Rod's foot was unharmed. The only damage was a tear to the shoe leather covering the steel toe guard.

Rod was working on the dock when a co-worker was having difficulty attaching a loading dock plate to a boxcar. The plate acts as a bridge from the dock to the boxcar for loading access.

"I got inside the boxcar to help with the plate," Rod recalled. "I was guiding him in when the plate slipped."

Rod started to move his feet but the plate fell on his left shoe. Despite the plate's 700 pounds, Rod claims "I didn't feel a thing."

A little torn shoe leather doesn't seem to matter to Rod. He just keeps thinking of what might have happened had he not been wearing his safety shoes: "There's no way I'd have any toes left."



NOT EVEN A DENT . . . A 700-pound dock plate was no match for Rod Mach's safety shoes.

## suggestion box

"There's got to be a better way" is an oft heard expression in the course of a working day.

Two Works employees have carried that kind of wishful thinking a step further to come up with better ways to perform their jobs. It has resulted in each of them having received suggestion awards totaling more than \$1,000.

**Dick Hanner** of Dept. 252 has earned awards totaling \$3,095 for his proposal that 416-pair cable be made on the No. 1 strander in one operation.

"My legs are getting older," Dick said, explaining why he came up with the idea for a one-step operation. "Anything I can do to make my job easier while making it more profitable for the company works out for both of us."

**Tom Filipski** of Dept. 746 plans to use his \$1,270 suggestion award to help pay for daughter Joanne's wed-

ding back in Buffalo, N.Y. His winning idea was that a metering system be installed to monitor the oscillator circuit at the four irradiated polyvinyl chloride (IPVC) vaults.

The system will allow a maintenance man to pinpoint problems more effectively, Tom said, and also will make it safer to work in a high-voltage area.

Other employees who have earned suggestion awards include:

**Leonard Perkons**, Dept. 741, \$315.

**Neil Zimmer**, Dept. 746, \$155.

**Jerry Berger**, Dept. 435, \$100.

Dick Hanner



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 **Western Electric**

# service anniversaries

## april



Roy Martin  
35 years  
4/16/45



Ken Wigg  
30 years  
4/16/50



Allen Schwab  
25 years  
4/19/55

### 20 years

J. E. Aken  
G. D. Beutler  
B. M. Blunt  
A. B. Clausen

R. G. Engel  
D. E. Huscher  
E. K. Krambeck  
R. D. Kubie

D. J. Landon  
E. V. Mattox  
J. J. Pleskac Jr.  
W. O. Pokorny

Not pictured:

Toxie Greer  
30 years  
4/17/50

### 15 years

L. H. Bohannon  
R. M. Fitzgerald  
W. G. Iske

L. R. Nicholson  
G. W. Peterson  
V. G. Richardson

M. E. Ross  
R. W. Suverkrubbe  
D. M. Wajda



Bob Eggert  
25 years  
4/18/55



Jack Walker  
25 years  
4/3/55

### 10 years

C. K. Agee  
W. T. Beasley  
G. H. Belland  
J. L. Blessner  
L. M. Boger  
D. L. Borosko  
C. D. Brezenski  
W. M. Brown  
G. K. Busing  
L. C. Chollett  
N. T. Corbin  
V. C. Donahoe  
D. B. Drott  
L. L. Finley  
R. D. Frisbie  
U. M. Hamblin

B. D. Harris  
D. D. Harris  
R. B. Haselton  
G. H. Keller  
M. J. Marcuzzo  
P. R. McClelland  
H. R. McGee  
S. R. McPherson  
J. H. Miller  
M. P. O'Connor  
D. C. Pickett  
L. B. Post  
D. L. Rowland  
S. H. Ryder  
A. J. Sanchez  
L. W. Schlotfeld

R. E. Slothower  
S. C. Tasto  
V. Temple  
G. M. Torson  
A. M. Vance

## retirements



Charles Vacanti  
23 years



Vera Tridle  
21 years



Eleanor  
Krambeck  
20 years



Margaret  
McGowan  
26 years

Not pictured:  
Loretta Asche  
23 years



## Good for a sonnet or two

IT DIDN'T RAIN on this parade of Easter bonnets in Dept. 439. Department employee Cookie Jefferson thought that a homemade hat contest before Easter would help "break up the monotony" of the daily work routine. Kathy Schutte's creation won first place in the contest. Her hat was the unanimous choice of five other department employees who served as judges. Entrants in the contest were (front row, from left) Virginia Boult, Gerri Jones, Heather Bailey; (middle, from left) Ruby Williams, Kathy Schutte, Cookie Jefferson; (back, from left) Barb Bunton, Peggy Carnes, Nikki Rust and Ann Vacek.

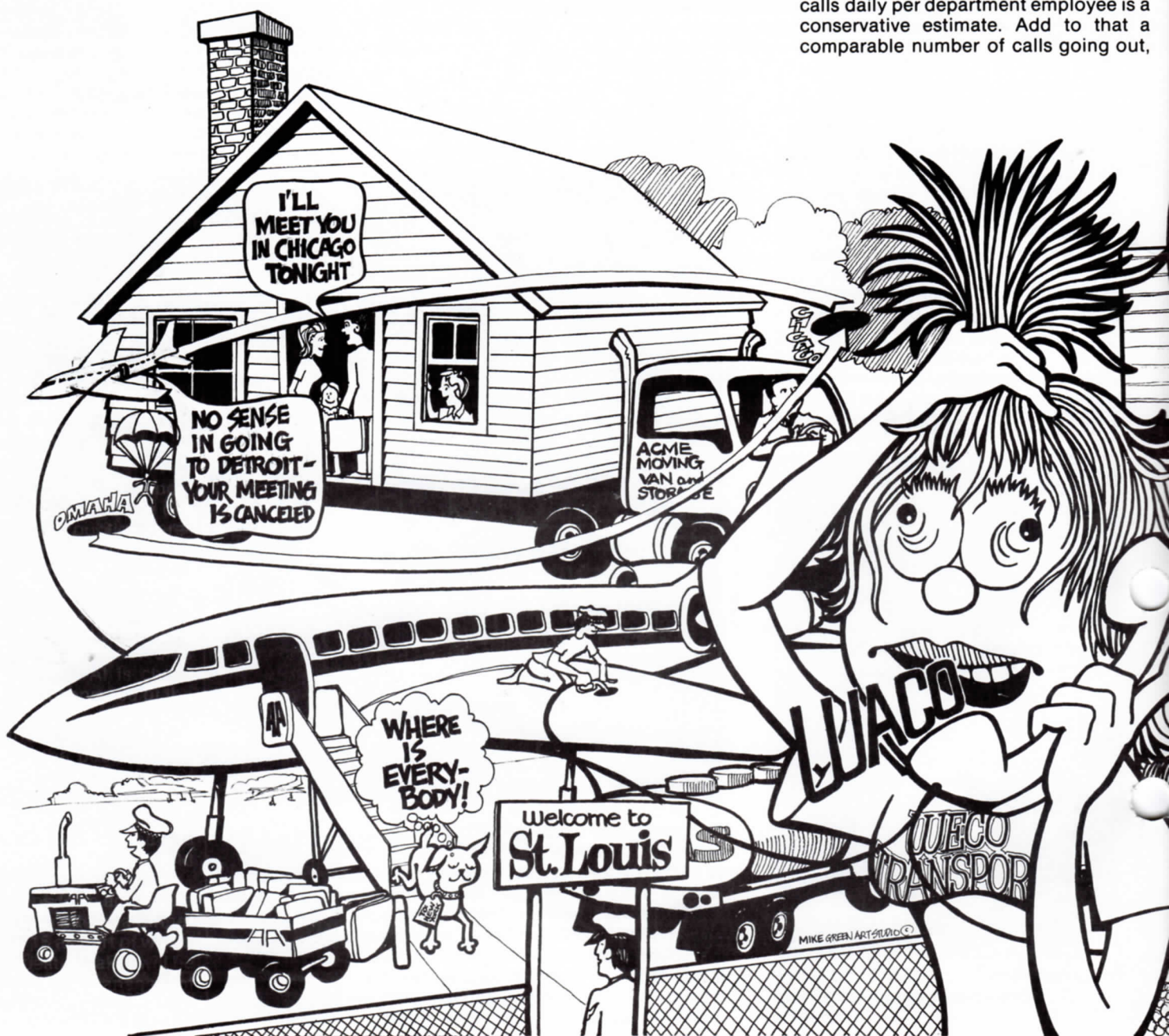
# The people who keep Omaha on the move

"Transportation . . ."  
"Yes, we're waiting for a truckload of steel."  
"You've got a what where?"  
"No, no, no. That's WECO, not Waco, Neb. WECO. Western Electric Company."

That's not exactly how the telephone conversation went at the Omaha Works end, but the incident isn't far from the truth. A new driver mistakenly had delivered a shipment to Waco, a town just outside of Lincoln, instead of to the Works.

When foul-ups like this occur, or when other matters arise involving the transporting of Works people or goods, the phones in the transportation department ring.

. . . And ring. Fifty incoming phone calls daily per department employee is a conservative estimate. Add to that a comparable number of calls going out,



and it's no wonder department desk phones are Touch-a-matic® models.

The seven employees in the Works' transportation department are responsible for everything from lining up carriers to transport our products to making transportation arrangements for special visitors to the plant.

Should Southwestern Bell need seven coils in a hurry, someone in transportation arranges for a carrier to make the special delivery. When a Works employee is transferred to Atlanta, transportation handles moving household goods and cars, and making flight reservations for family members. And when Fido lands at Seattle's airport instead of Atlanta's, transportation comes to the rescue.

"It's definitely not boring work," said Richard Shropshire, a transportation associate.

Gerry Coakley, who keeps the department's 512 drawerfuls of tariffs (price lists) up to date, agrees.

"It's so busy some days it leaves me tearing my hair out," she said, "but I'd be bored if it didn't."

Gerry's phone is one of the few Works numbers listed in the city's telephone directory under "transportation." She answers many a call from lost truckers asking directions to the plant.

Some Works employees, apparently misunderstanding the transportation department's function, have called up asking about joining car pools, she said.

**ACCIDENTS** pose the most difficult of problems in the department, Richard said. Say a truckload of Works products is involved in a freeway accident. If the accident is local, a transportation representative like Richard, Bob Janssen or Herb Shelton — usually accompanied by an engineer — goes out to survey damage to the goods.

The transportation department decides how much if any of the load should continue to the destination or be returned to the Works. Then, it informs the

customer of the delay and alerts production control personnel so arrangements may be made to replace damaged goods.

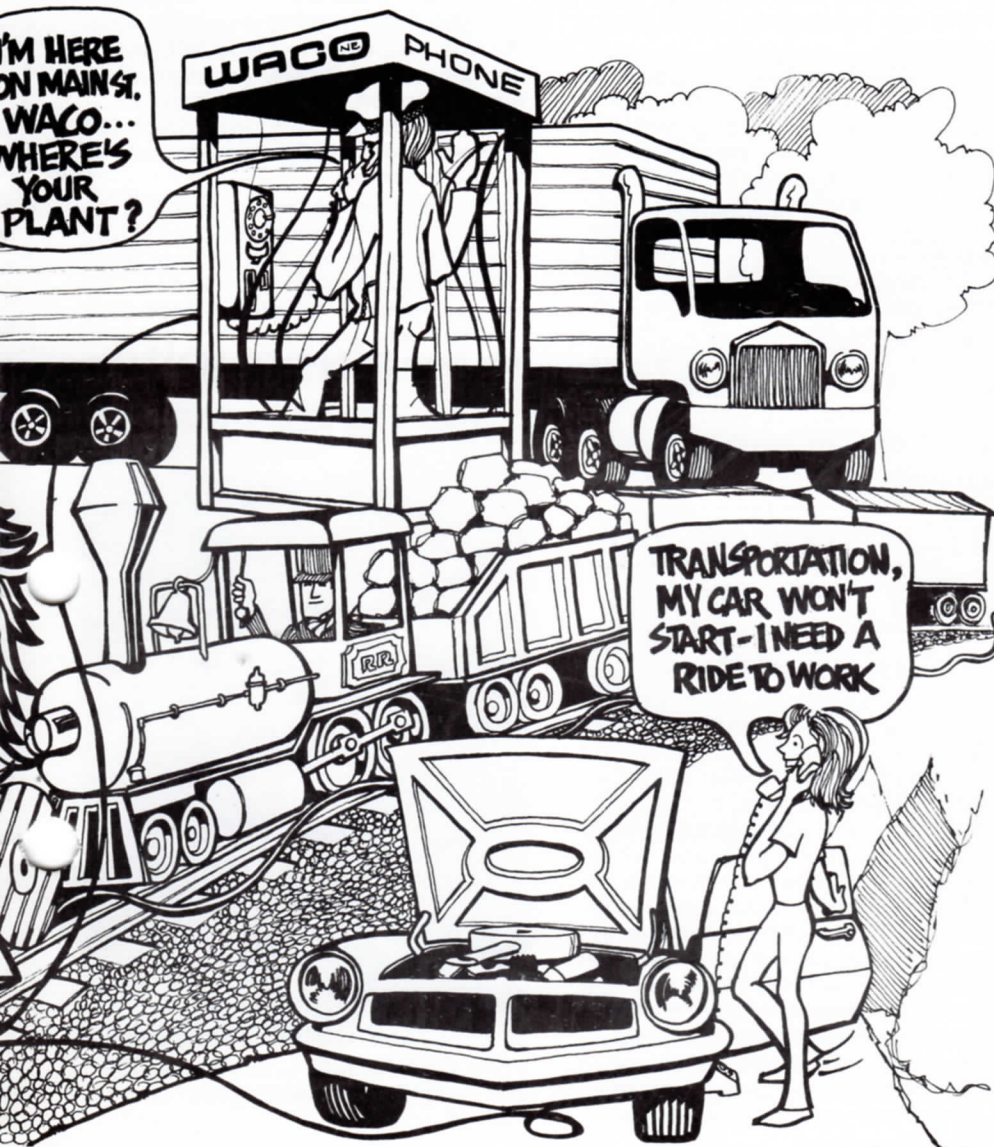
"It can get terribly involved," Richard said, just arranging for the return of a mangled truck trailer.

Natural disasters — such as blizzards and floods — can cause almost as much havoc. That's when transportation employees play what department chief Al Dodge calls "the hopscotch game." Tabs are kept on carriers who are rerouted to bypass storms, he said, and air traffic reservations are rescheduled accordingly.

Doing the "impossible" becomes somewhat of a norm. Delores Dune-kacke, who handles flight reservations for Works employees taking business trips, said the fun really begins when last-minute changes occur. She recalled that one employee was on a jet somewhere between Omaha and Chicago when she learned his meeting in Detroit had been canceled.

Transportation section chief Paul Pickrel took over. With the help of transportation personnel in the central regional office in Rolling Meadows, Ill., the employee was paged on board his flight as well as at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport. He was able to avoid continuing his needless flight to Detroit.

Delores is glad she's so busy that "the days go by fast." However, her friends (Continued on Page 7)



## Transportation Week observed

The week of May 11 through 17 has been designated National Transportation Week. The purpose of the observance is to increase public awareness of the importance of transportation industries — trucking, shipping, railways and airlines.

The transportation systems are "America's lifelines," said Al Dodge, department chief of Omaha Works transportation services. Al is chairman of Nebraska's observance of the special week.

Highlights of the week will include free admission for the public to the Western Heritage Museum, 801 S. 10th St., on May 13. Buses and trucks will be on display in the parking lot, Al said, and passenger rail cars may be toured on the lower level of the old Union Station.

About 600 persons from across the state are expected to attend a dinner in Omaha on May 15 as part of week-long festivities. Guest speaker will be Wayne Hunt, general manager of Western Electric Purchasing and Transportation.

# BW wire bows to something better

From now on it should be considerably easier to keep a clean house in Dept. 287. The "fuzzies" are gone.

Fuzzies, (otherwise called lint) developed during the department's cotton winding and insulating operations and would float about the area. Now that those operations have been curtailed, the fuzzies are no more.

Winding and insulating BW wire was a job brought to the Works from the closed Buffalo plant in 1976. It was just another kind of cotton-insulated wire Omaha had been making since its beginning.

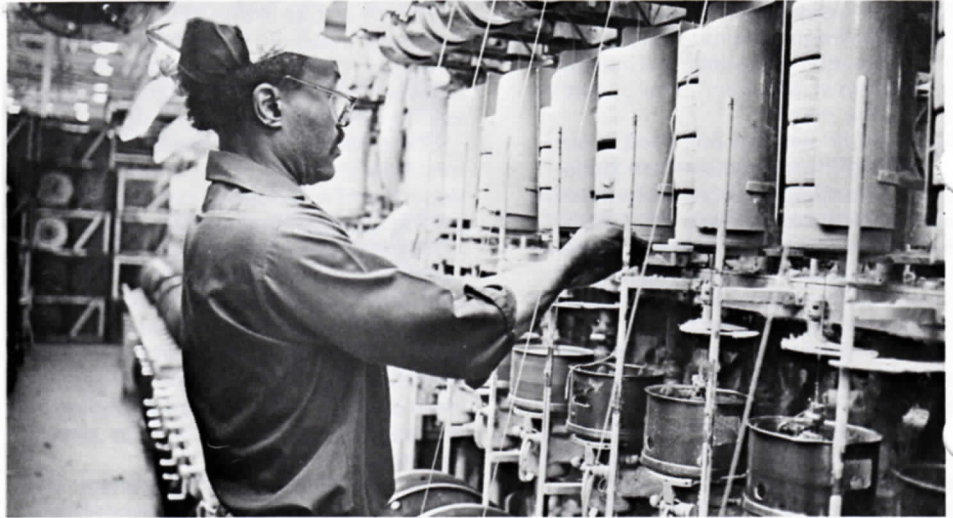
Today, there is an irradiated wire superior to cotton-insulated wire: DP2 wire. Demand for DP2 wire is the reason the Works has switched from making BW wire to the irradiated wire. In so doing, it marked the end of an era of sorts, because the Works was the last location in Western Electric with cotton winding and insulating operations. In its heyday, at least four manufacturing locations produced cotton-insulated wire.

When section chief Dick Nielsen first came to the department three years ago, 18 people in the department produced 35 MCF to 40 MCF (million conductor feet) of BW wire per week.

"Each operator had 36 heads (reels) running at a time" during the insulating process, he said. "The operators had to develop a rhythm to keep those heads running continuously," stopping only one reel at a time for removal when it was full.

Dept. 287 was responsible for winding cotton thread on cardboard tubes according to the color combinations needed and prior to use on the insulating lines.

During the insulating step, cotton was



WRAPPING IT UP . . . Mack Thornton was one of the last to operate a cotton insulating line.

wound around a base wire. Next, the wire was coated with lacquer. Finally, the wire was twisted and put on spools for shipment.

The DP2 wire, which is being made in Dept. 282, requires fewer steps, said Alan Klein, a planning engineer who worked on the cotton insulating job. Calling it "a high-speed process," Al said DP2 wire is manufactured on a tandem line and processed in irradiation vaults.

DP2 wire also is easier to use than BW wire for terminating purposes, he said, because the insulating material is more readily stripped off.

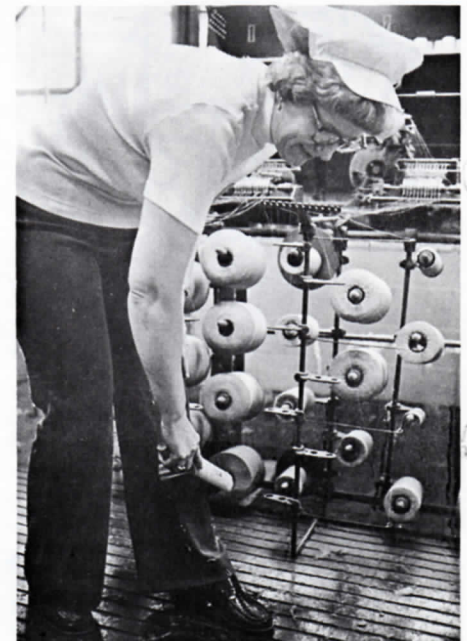
Braiding in Building 30 is the only cotton operation remaining at the Works. BH and AM wires from that area still come to Dept. 287 to be lacquered, twist-

ed and wound on spools, Dick said.

Meanwhile, the last of the employees who had been working on cotton winding and insulating in Dept. 287 are on new jobs at the Works. Among them is Mack Thornton, who is working in Dept. 282. He remembers his jobs in Dept. 287 as being "more fun than I've ever had" in any previous job.

Don Hunt remains in Dept 287 as a layout operator in charge of lacquering braided wire. He retains good memories of the cotton insulating job as does Jan Beccard, now an adjuster in Dept. 728.

But no way, Jan said, is she going to miss those fuzzies.



FREE OF FUZZIES . . . Jan Beccard said she doesn't miss cleaning lint from her clothes.



energy . . .  
less is more

SUNSHINE through skylights sufficiently lights up the new scrap reclamation building being constructed north of Building 30. The skylights were installed as the result of a suggestion submitted by Jerry Berger (pictured) of Dept. 435. The building will house scrap prior to shipment out of the Works, and will not be heated. Thus, heat loss through the skylights won't be a factor (one reason why skylights cannot be installed in existing Works structures). Some artificial lighting will be installed in the building. However, the majority of daytime illumination is expected to come from the sun, which should recover the initial cost of the skylights and save energy as well as future expenditures.

# Happiness is home telephones that never ring

(Continued from Page 5)

don't understand why she doesn't call them more often. "I'm on the phone all day," she explained. "When the phone rings at night, I just cringe."

**THE FRUIT** of transportation's labors can be seen in departmental records. Last year alone, the department saved the Works \$2 million that otherwise might have been spent had there not been a department to render transportation services.

About 20,000 freight bills, 7,600 flight reservations and 22 household moves were handled by the department in 1979. The department also managed to recover about \$157,000 in overcharges through careful auditing of its bills.

It's not even unusual for department personnel to receive phone calls at home concerning missing shipments of piece parts and such. As one employee noted, "People can bug the hell out of us."

But that "bugging" ironically may be just what makes working in the transportation department so satisfying.

Analyst Bob Janssen summed it up: "People need us."

## On the cover

Purchasing's expeditor Duane Iwanski can smile, but Richard Shropshire of transportation is too busy answering telephones and keeping tabs on billings — not to mention tracking down proofs of shipment deliveries for Duane.

## BSSP/SSP results

The following are the February unit values for both the Bell System Savings Plan (BSSP) and the Savings and Security Plan for Non-Salaried Employees (SSP):

### BSSP

	Units Value	Units Credited Per Dollar
AT&T	1.9101	.5235
Government Obligations	2.0611	.4851
Equity Portfolio	1.5583	.6416
Guaranteed Interest Fund	1.0134	.9867

### SSP

	Units Value	Units Credited Per Dollar
AT&T	.8919	1.1210
Guaranteed Interest Fund	1.0967	.9117



## Spring party April 26 event

"STEPPIN' INTO THE '80s" in style is what this year's annual WEOMA spring party is all about. The event, which will feature dinner and a style show, will be held April 26 at the New Tower, 78th Street and West Dodge Road. George Brown of Dept. 726 and LaVonne Stamp of Dept. 413 model a sampling of the clothes Ben Simon's will provide for the style show. Other employees who will model at the spring party are Alberta Seals, Dee Arnold, Charity Smith, Jane Kahler, Gloria Coleman, Judy Couchman, Carnell Green, Jerry Martin, Larry Blanke, Cully Union, Paul Clark, Bernard McCarter, Steve Christman, Buddy Boyles, Matt Dragon and Albert Waggstaff. The party starts at 6 p.m.



Crystal and Anita Hicks

*'My parents have never missed any of my games or meets. Some kids' parents haven't even come once.'*

Anita Hicks likes to talk to her friends about daughter Crystal. "I always knew she was going to be a good runner," she tells them. "When she was small, she used to run away in the neighborhood — and she'd get away fast."

Anita, who works in production control (Dept. 413), speaks of her daughter with pride. And rightly so.

Now a sophomore at Cathedral High, Chris (as her friends call her) already has more than 100 trophies, medals and ribbons to her credit. She's been earning them in competitive track and basketball events since she was 9.

Her parents, Anita and Robert, watched her win them all. They even bought a van to double as Dad's work vehicle in the carpentry business and to transport Chris and her teammates to her many sporting events.

**AS A FRESHMAN**, Chris was a starter on Cathedral's girls' varsity basketball team, Anita said. She plays forward and was one of the top three rebounders during last season's state championship tourney, contributing to her team's winning the Class C Nebraska Championship in girls' basketball.

In fact, Chris was named to the all-state Class C first team by the Lincoln Sunday Journal-Star. She was the only sophomore named to any class of all-state teams picked by the paper.

Last year Chris won the Girls' State Championship in the 100-yard dash. This track season, Cathedral coach Tom Kros expects even greater things from Chris.

"Her potential is unlimited," Tom said, "and each day she motivates herself a little more."

Being active in sports means Chris

must practice every day for two or three hours — including weekends — during the school season. In the summer, she works out as a member of the Midwest Striders track team. Between practices, games and meets, she manages to keep a B average in school.

"Sometimes I don't feel like practicing, because I'm tired from staying up late the night before," Chris admitted. But she's loved basketball from the first time she played against her brothers in their back yard — and track since her father took her to a meet at age 9.

**ONE REASON** she's able to do so well in sports, she said, is because of the support her parents give. "My parents have never missed any of my games or meets," she said. "Some kids' parents haven't even come once."

"They also let me make my own deci-

sions," she added, and they have instilled in her an important philosophy: "Sometimes I worry about failing. But my parents tell me it's more important that I just do my best."

Backing like that only makes Chris want to do even better for her parents, she said. She has hopes of winning a scholarship to college, where she might study toward a physical education degree.

And then there's the 1984 Olympics. She'd like to make the Olympic track team, and her coach seems to think she has a distinct chance.

She's particularly a good candidate for the quarter and half-mile events, Tom said. "Chris has tremendous speed, of course . . . and endurance."

Above all, she's got Mom and Dad cheering for her in the stands.

# Mom and Dad bring out the best