

the Westerner

Omaha Works
January 1981

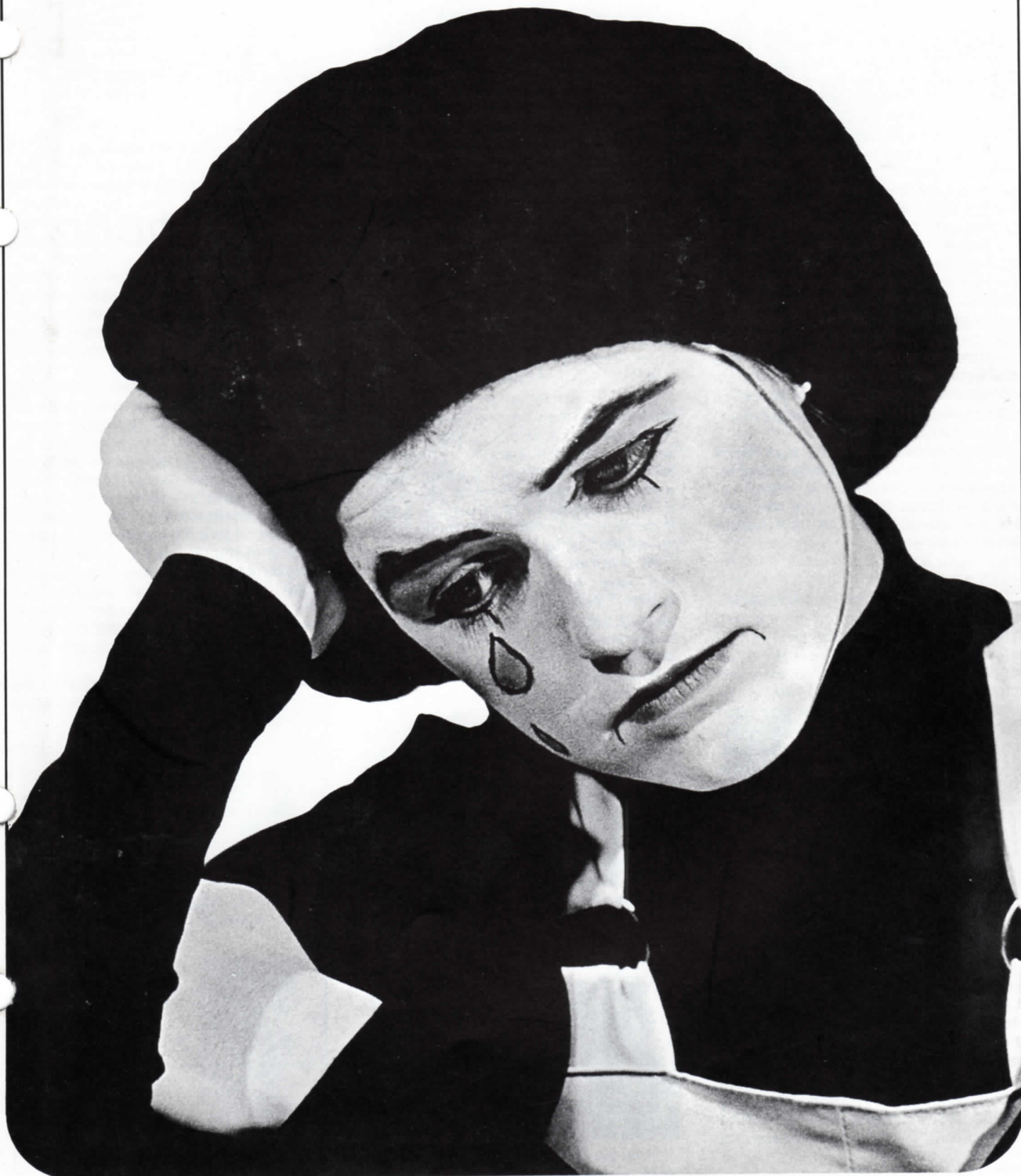


Photo by Robin Boe and Linda Ryan

for your information

Legislation has been enacted which affects the Western Electric Fund's United Student Aid Fund Loan programs. Some of the program's essential provisions, which went into effect Jan. 1, 1981, are summarized here:

—Nine percent interest rate for first-time borrowers who obtain student loans to cover the cost of education for any period of instruction beginning on or after Jan. 1, 1981.

—Seven percent interest rate for repeat borrowers.

—Six-month grace period for nine percent loans and continuation of nine-month grace period for seven percent or eight percent loans.

—New deferment provisions are established, with the new six-month grace period to follow any period of authorized deferment before repayment is required to resume.

Other provisions involve loan limits and a redefinition of dependent and independent students. For more information about the loan program, contact the Works' personnel and benefit services office . . .

. . . The interest rate for the Guaranteed Interest Fund option of the Bell System Savings Plan (BSSP) will be 11.8 percent in 1981. All money in the participant's account including investments made in plan years 1979 and 1980 will be credited with 11.8 percent in plan year 1981. If they haven't yet, all eligible employees should receive a label with this information to be affixed to the cover of the plan prospectus . . .

. . . From the safety department comes news of accomplishment. Madeleine Engel of the department has been certified as an industrial hygienist in-training, having passed a day-long, comprehensive core exam. The department, meanwhile, is calling attention to the fact that the Works achieved a million man-hours without a disabling injury as of Dec. 19. If all goes well, as you read this we will be in the midst of a week when two numbers per day are being drawn in the Safety Pays game. If the Works achieved 1½ million man-hours without serious injury by end of the week starting Jan. 18, plans were to feature double drawing for seven days starting Jan. 25.

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 for Non-Salaried Employees (SSP):

BSSP			SSP		
	Units Value	Units Credited Per Dollar		Units Value	Units Credited Per Dollar
AT&T (Oct.)	2.0329	.4918	AT&T (Oct.)	.9492	1.0535
(Nov.)	1.9933	.5016	(Nov.)	.9308	1.0742
Government Obligations	2.1713	.4605	Guaranteed Interest Fund	1.1694	.8551
Equity Portfolio	2.1759	.4595		1.1786	.8483
	1.8515	.5400			
	2.0766	.4815			
Guaranteed Interest Fund	1.0802	.9257			
	1.0888	.9184			

Two employees earn honors

Two Omaha Works employees, Bob Loesch and Dick Veach, are the recipients of special honors. Bob, a senior engineer in Dept. 736, was awarded a U.S. patent. Dick, safety department chief (Dept. 524), received a plaque from the Nebraska Environmental Control Council, in appreciation for his leadership as chairman for four years.

Bob earned a patent for his invention which involves the operation of the PRAM and STRAM machines in the station cord area. He devised a method which permits the testing of high-voltage breakdown and low-voltage continuity simultaneously, using the machines.

"It involves a unique circuit which will save time, costs and improve quality," Bob said. Although this is the second patent he has earned since he began working for Western Electric, Bob was just as excited about the honor.

Working toward a patent is "part of my job," Bob explained. "It's visible proof that you have originality."

His elation, perhaps, is enhanced further when he thinks back to the days he studied to be an engineer. A West Germany native, Bob spoke no English when he came to America and undertook technical training. "It was tough," he recalled, "but fortunately, physics is a universal language."

Dick Veach has served on the Nebraska Environmental Control Council since April 1972, when he was appointed by then Gov. J. J. Exon. The

council sets up rules and regulations to comply with federal guidelines about the environment, and approves or disapproves proposals as presented by Nebraska's Department of Environmental Control.

While Dick was chairman from 1976 through 1980, most of the state's air and water rules and regulations were issued or updated. The council also began formulating criteria concerning solid waste and the establishment of hazardous waste landfills in the state.

Dick's particularly proud of the way the council helped work with the city of Omaha in improving the operation and maintenance standards of Missouri River Plant waste treatment facilities. The standards were of concern because the council had granted the city more than \$100 million in federal and state funds to build the facilities.

Dick will continue as a member of the council, serving as the representative for heavy industry.



Dick Veach



Bob Loesch

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Editor

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Western Electric

service anniversaries

january



Vernon Dill
35 years
1/31/46



Bill McNabb
35 years
1/29/46



Ray Olson
35 years
1/28/46



Charles Hanzlik
25 years
1/13/56

20 years

H. R. Bloodsworth
W. J. Deegan

H. E. Weller
G. V. Wilde

15 years

G. W. Aldrich
R. C. Ashbrook
A. Benkis Jr.
D. D. Brittell
G. W. Callaghan
R. A. Callihan Jr.
F. W. Donahoo
B. J. Drews
A. M. Flemings
T. R. Foutch
J. G. Gagner
C. W. Green
D. J. Gurney

D. F. Hailey
J. K. Hinkle
J. R. Levi
M. H. Majors
R. F. Melia
E. H. Nihsen
H. R. Ostrand
G. M. Pacholski
S. B. Prue
W. E. Scott
M. E. Van Ampting
P. R. Vogel
V. A. Volkart

10 years

B. A. Greene
S. S. Hayes
H. J. Marx

J. W. Peterson
M. C. Walters

Not pictured: Willie Shields
25 years
1/18/56



We have moved

Remember how difficult it could be to find the public relations office on the first floor of the administration building? Not now. Public relations — "PR" — doesn't live there anymore. We've moved to the southwest corner of the second floor, a little farther for the folks in Building 30 to walk, but maybe a little easier to find.

We're just now getting settled in our new home since the move was made before Christmas.

There's **Judy Couchman**, whose writing and designing talents are put to good use on special projects. She's even dabbled in songwriting (that tune used in the 1979 safety videotape was hers), and has come up with some rather unusual props for her projects. In fact, if you see her at the front steps tugging at two shopping bags, don't ask questions . . . just open the door.

Also on the PR crew is **Robin Boe**. In addition to her photographic and writing contributions to the department, she coordinates gifts to non-profit groups, company memberships and tours of the plant. She's never gotten lost in the shops, she says, but there are days — particularly with a rambunctious group of students — when she's thought twice about losing the group.

Rog Howard is the guy who's never at his desk (if you can find it). As our audiovisual specialist, he does photography work for various slide and videotape presentations — safety and quality

shows, customer programs and so on. He's one person who can give a slide show animation, to make you think you're watching a movie. And to think he does it all for the price of a cup of coffee.

Our department chief is **Don Lanspa**, who almost miraculously makes sense out of what it is we do in public relations. Of course, he's ably assisted by department secretary **Barb Krzemien**, whose organization and composure remain intact when the rest of us are frantic. It makes you wonder what she knows that the rest of us don't.

Then there's yours truly, **Linda Ryan**. My job includes taking photos and writing newsletters and speeches, but putting out *The Westerner* is my main responsibility. If you see me walking around with a faraway look in my eyes, I'm either cooking up a front cover scheme or I'm lost . . . help me!

And speaking of help, I'm still counting on readers to keep me supplied with story ideas. Don't let a few flights of stairs keep you away from our new office. Come on up and see me sometime.

suggestion box

Just before Christmas, **Allen Schwab's** wife came home from shopping, expressing hope that Allen would be able to pay for all the gifts. He remembered telling her, "I don't know how we're ever going to get ahead if you always spend all the money."

That's when he showed her the check he received for an idea accepted in the employee suggestion program. The award amounted to \$3,065 for his idea involving the use of scrap galvanized material in the manufacture of 40-type cabinets.

"It was all I could do to keep her from going back to the store," said Allen, who works in Dept. 437.

Erma Gills of Dept. 441 also put her suggestion award to good use in paying off holiday bills. She received \$1,205 for an idea to use a smaller box for packing closures.

"The idea was so simple, I couldn't figure out why it hadn't been done before," she said.

William Heskin of Dept. 741 also recently earned a sizable suggestion award, \$1,045. His idea called for making stripper details of a tool out of tungsten carbide.

Other recipients of suggestion awards include:

Paul Chalgren, Dept. 282, \$775 and \$520.

John Francavilla, Dept. 745, \$630.

Byron Frank, Dept. 745, \$465.

Charles Sipe, Dept. 411, \$335.

George Chonis and **David Howell**, Dept. 746, \$252.50 each.

John Okupski, Dept. 745, \$195.

Ralph Burgett, Dept. 437, \$150.

Thomas Filipowski, Dept. 746, \$100.



Allen Schwab



Erma Gills

Battling the blues



When a weekend off has been particularly enjoyable, it's not uncommon to wake up to a "Blue Monday."

Resuming the weekday work or school routine often can dampen one's spirits. But when the depression felt on Blue Monday spills into the days that follow, there may be cause for concern.

Depression is one of the most common of all illnesses, according to Dr. Beverley Mead, associate dean of the Creighton Medical School. It affects a person's work and play habits, and in serious cases can have a negative impact on one's ability to go on living.

Bouts of depression occur more frequently just before and during the Christmas holiday season, Dr. Mead said. "A lonely person may feel left out when he sees others around him are happy and loved," he explained.

The peak period for depression, however, appears to be in the early spring. There is no fail-safe way to measure depression, Dr. Mead said, "but we can see results — such as suicide — and suicide is worst in April and May."

Why depression increases at that time is "purely theory," Dr. Mead said, but it may be the result of a physiological imbalance triggered in early spring.

It's important to recognize the basic



two types of depression and their symptoms: Reactive depression and endogenous depression.

Reactive depression occurs as a reaction to someone or some outside factor, such as mourning the loss of a loved one. This is a typical form of depression, Dr. Mead said, and "under certain circumstances is to be expected."

Endogenous depression isn't caused

Talking to depressed friend c

Depression is an illness over which a person has little control. One needs the help of others if it's to be remedied successfully.

A problem arises in that a person may not know what to do in such a situation. That includes people who may know someone showing signs of depression.

"One of the most important things you can do is to talk to the person you think might be depressed," said the associate dean of Creighton Medical School, Dr. Beverley Mead.

Usually, a depressed individual won't instigate talk about his depression until it becomes quite severe. And unfortunately, because such a person tends to be withdrawn and irritable, people around him leave him alone.

"Anytime you have a fellow worker

or a friend who's depressed, don't be afraid to ask him if he's down about something," Dr. Mead urged. The approach must be sincere and tactful, of course, but asking will not make the person feel any worse. "If it does anything, it will make him feel better," he said.

A person who feels any kind of depression taking hold "can use a bit of activity as first aid," Dr. Mead suggested. "Take a walk — hang a picture. You usually can feel a little bit better if you can muster an ounce of energy to do something."

More severe depression frequently requires outside help — counseling and/or prescribed medication. If a person knows he has a tendency to become severely depressed, he should

by obvious outside factors but "seems to come from within an individual," he said. This form of depression is more likely to manifest physical symptoms — arthritic-like pain, aching back, and dull or tension headaches. Endogenous depression also is apt to be more severe than reactive depression.

side from physical symptoms which may be associated with endogenous depression, other symptoms are evident, including:

—**Sleep disturbance.** Dr. Mead said this disturbance may be in the form of insomnia. A person may have no trouble falling asleep, but wakes up during the night. Sometimes the disturbance is the opposite of insomnia, however, and a person may sleep more than usual.

—**Appetite disturbance.** Depression can result in a loss of appetite. (Mild reactive depression, however, may result in increased eating.) "Depression is a common cause of **unplanned weight loss,**" noted Dr. Mead.

—**General slowdown of overall physical and mental functions.** A person finds it difficult to concentrate or think quickly. He may lack pep or energy to the extent that he no longer participates in an activity he once enjoyed.

—**Withdrawal and irritability.** A depressed person may keep to himself and "doesn't join the party," Dr. Mead

said. He also tends to be grumpy, easily annoyed with things that formerly weren't bothersome.

"A person who is depressed should seek help, particularly if it's a depression so bad that these symptoms are showing. Depression is a treatable condition," Dr. Mead emphasized.

Treatment includes counseling, even for a lesser form of depression which may seem to surface with greater frequency and intensity than a person thinks normal.

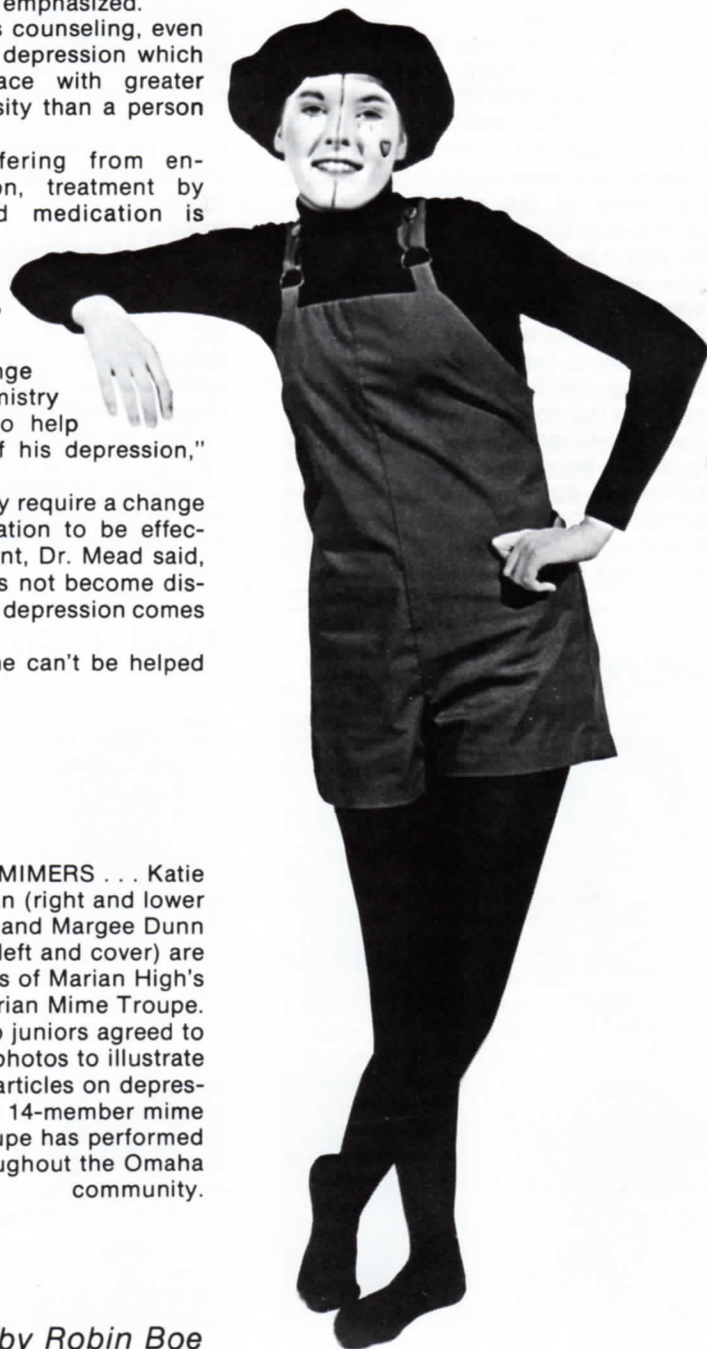
For persons suffering from endogenous depression, treatment by physician-prescribed medication is invaluable.

"Antidepressant drugs are **not** pep pills or tranquilizers," Dr. Mead noted.

Antidepressants change a person's body chemistry over several days to help "lift a patient out of his depression," he explained.

Sometimes this may require a change in dosage or medication to be effective. What is important, Dr. Mead said, is that a person does not become discouraged if a cure for depression comes slowly.

"It doesn't mean he can't be helped — because he can."



MIMERS . . . Katie Spielman (right and lower left) and Margee Dunn (upper left and cover) are members of Marian High's Merry Marian Mime Troupe.

The two juniors agreed to pose for photos to illustrate these articles on depression. The 14-member mime troupe has performed throughout the Omaha community.

Photos by Robin Boe and Linda Ryan

an help

be aware of its symptoms and seek assistance.

Start with one's family physician — "not necessarily a psychiatrist," Dr. Mead said. If a person doesn't have a regular physician, he can approach mental health clinics and agencies established in the community.

The Eastern Nebraska Human Services Agency (ENHSA) is one such helpful resource and may be called at 444-6500. Client fees are based on a sliding scale according to income.

Another source of help may be Recovery, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to helping people under emotional stress to help themselves. The telephone number for that organization in the Omaha area is 345-1603.

Employee views change

A considerable improvement in employee attitudes over past years is reflected in the results of the 1980 Employee Communications Study.

The 1980 study is the fourth Western Electric has conducted in as many years as a continuing measurement of employee attitudes and opinions. It was designed to gauge employee satisfaction with information they receive on company issues and endeavors.

For the first time since the annual survey was begun, more than half (56 percent) of employees at all levels considered communication in Western Electric to be open.

The 1980 survey was sent to 2,400 employees last April. Out of 178 questions asked both in 1979 and 1980, responses to 128 indicated a higher degree of approval of company policies or greater optimism in the future than in 1979. Most of the responses to remaining questions showed no change, with only a few less positive replies.

The vast majority (91 percent) of employees indicated they think W.E. is a good place to work, with eight out of 10 expressing they think their jobs are interesting, challenging, and make a difference in the company's performance.

Seventy-seven percent considered Western to be well-managed, and most employees agreed their immediate supervisors treat them with respect and are willing to listen to employees who want to talk about their jobs.

"The survey is pointing to a trend toward improvement in relationships," noted Jim Bosworth, Omaha Works manager of human resources, labor relations, environmental and industrial engineering.

Referring to responses indicating optimism in the company's future, he credited frank communication with employees as helpful in forming this attitude.

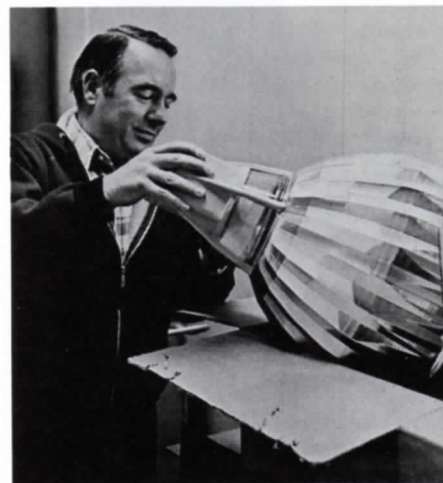
However, the study indicated recurring problem areas that must be corrected, he said. More than half of all employees gave fair or poor ratings on how the company keeps them informed about changes affecting their jobs, how it reviews performance appraisals and provides growth opportunities, and how the company considers the employees' interests in introducing technological changes.

"We're trying to address these problems through such media as newsletters and employee publications," Jim said, "and we're trying to develop feedback mechanisms whereby employees can make their concerns known to management." Random polling of employees on topics of concern and recording their responses anonymously on tape for management to hear ("Floor Talk") is an example, he said.

"We are concerned some problems are still showing up in the study, and we will continue to find ways to resolve them."

energy ...

less is more



"LET THERE BE LIGHT," decreed the Omaha Works' Energy Conservation Committee, but use less energy. The replacement of reel yard lights complies with that goal. Twenty-one 400-watt, high-pressure sodium fixtures have replaced 33 incandescent lights of 1000 watts apiece. Twenty-five 250-watt, high-pressure sodium fixtures replace 25 mercury vapor lights of 400 watts apiece. "They really are much better," noted Bill Lepley (pictured), a second-shift employee who operates a reel yard crane sporting new lights. Not only do the new lights burn brighter, but they use less electricity and will save the Works about \$14,000 yearly.

retirements



Zona Plymale
24 years



Leonard Pacas
21 years



Sam Keyser
25 years



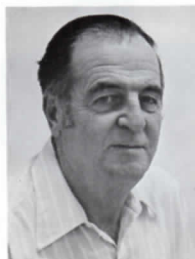
Jean Andersen
21 years



Tom Larsen
30 years



Norman Groff
33 years



Dave Dunn
39 years



Gerry Alfons
30 years



Walt Jingleski
39 years



Bill Phelan
31 years



Joseph Smith
33 years



Boyd Swarts
34 years

New cabinets to feature designer look

Maybe it's inevitable.

Jeans are now designer jeans. Even fast-food restaurants are designed with antique-looking and Tiffany-style accents.

Later this year, the Omaha Works should be manufacturing what could be dubbed "designer" FDI cabinets when a new 80-type cabinet goes into production.

The new cabinet has been designed to be more aesthetically acceptable particularly in metropolitan areas, said Larry Bailey, a planning engineer in Dept. 475 who is working on the project.

The cabinet features a ribbed-effect, two-tone exterior which may be used as a signboard, say, at the entrance to an apartment complex. Interface cabinets that blend in with the design of their environment appear to be growing in demand, Larry said, and their future "looks promising."

There's more to the 80-type cabinet than looks, however. For one, it will have "cross-elasticity" with 40-type FDI cabinets. This means the 80-type cabinet will provide the same function as the 40-type cabinet, but in a larger pair size capacity. Cable from a central office will be routed to the 80-type



STYLISH CABINET . . . Larry Bailey (seated) and Harold Slaight review plans for the new 80-type cabinet to be manufactured at the Omaha Works.

cabinet where pairs are assigned to subscribers.

In addition, the 80-type cabinet can be equipped to handle the Subscriber Loop Carrier System (SLC-96). The "Slick 96," as it is nicknamed, permits multiple handling of telephone subscribers on one pair of wires. This adds up to considerable savings for the Bell operating companies because more voices can be channeled on less cable, Larry noted.

Early this year, the Omaha Works will

assemble eight prototypes of the new cabinet. Some will go to Bell telephone companies across the country and the rest will be used for display and for further testing by Bell Laboratories and Western Electric.

Eventually, the Works will manufacture about 4,000 cabinets a year, projected for 1985. For now, Larry is coordinating a task force in Dept. 475, whose responsibility is to work out the details of introducing 80-type cabinet manufacture at the Works.



Bill Ruge
39 years



Bill Zorko
39 years



Donald Miller
21 years



Bud Hayes
34 years



Frank Havelka
34 years



Paul Arctander
41 years



Lyle Barton
34 years



Len Branecki
38 years



Carl Knutson
33 years



Lee Baldauf
33 years

Not pictured:

James Kratt — 24 years

Gerry Coakley — 22 years

Robert Kensinger — 24 years

Ken Olson — 32 years

Guide to phone etiquette

So you received one of those new-fangled telephones for Christmas, huh? Perhaps in your rush to gather up gift wrappings and empty eggnog glasses, you accidentally threw out the complimentary copy of "Ma Bell's Book of Etiquette on the Proper Use of the Telephone."

For your benefit — and for others among you who need to brush up on the principles of telephoning — the guide is reprinted here.

IT IS NOT considered proper etiquette to:

- Use the telephone receiver as a fly swatter.
- Put your boss on hold while you go down the hall to get a cup of coffee.
- Speak into the hearing end of the receiver (even if the mouthpiece needs to be cleaned).
- Play songs on the pushbutton telephone unless they have been requested by your listener.
- Proceed with an obscene phone call without first warning the listener the call is X-rated for persons age 17 and older. And do speak up — don't talk in whispers.

IT IS IN POOR TASTE to:

- Blow your nose while talking on the phone. Take care of these things before calling.
- Answer the phone in a gruff manner

such as "Yeah?" (Exceptions: If you are a football coach or a bookie.)

—Use the receiver of your wall phone to hang clothes when ironing.

—Dial Information and ask how to spell "halitosis" or the score of the Nebraska-Oklahoma game in 1973.

—Call a person and when he answers "Hello," you ask "Who is this?" If you can't remember who you are, you're in no condition to make a phone call.

UNDER NO CONDITION should you:

- Spray clean your receiver while talking to someone who cannot swim.
- Eat peanut brittle while talking to someone who wears dentures.
- Use the telephone to crack walnuts

—Flush the toilet while talking on the phone.

—Fall asleep while Cousin Ella is talking to you about her third appendectomy.

ABOVE ALL, never:

- Use the telephone cord to tie up your children because they're getting on your nerves.
- Use the receiver mouthpiece to store toothpicks.
- Alter the bells of your telephone to play the Nebraska University fight song.

