

# WESTERNER

Omaha Works  
July 1986



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## On the cover

"Maybe if I pretend I don't see her, she'll go away," seems to be the tactic this kitten is taking in the face of a nosy fawn. Actually, Yo-yo the cat and Bucket the baby doe are the best of friends and play together. Bucket is an orphan who was brought to the home of Virginia Barker by the State Game Commission. A story about "bringing up baby" appears on Page 4.

## WESTERNER

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# PECC people join Omaha team

**D**ivestiture has been in effect since January 1984, but changes and adjustments within AT&T as a result of the former Bell System split continue today.

One recent change affects how new product lines and processes are developed for and introduced at the Omaha Works. Until March of this year, broadening product lines and helping to increase sales for the manufacturing locations in the Network Media Division was the work of the Product Engineering Control Center (PECC).

PECC's offices and laboratories were located within the Atlanta Works building complex in Georgia, along with Product Line Management (PLM), the Materials Planning and Procurement Center (MPPC) and AT&T Bell Laboratories facilities.

But now PECC has been restructured and its staff has been reassigned to report directly to either the Phoenix, Atlanta or Omaha Works locations. As a result, the Omaha Works has 38 more people on roll ranging from management to technical-professional to clerical personnel. Don't look for their desks here, however, because they continue to live and work in Atlanta.

### Direct accountability

Their functions remain much the same, said Earl McLean, Omaha Works manager for

engineering. The difference is that the organization, now called the Engineering Development Organization, no longer reports to a director level in Atlanta. The individual Works locations have "direct accountability for their work lines," McLean said.

What this means is that "we will get more focused attention on our technical processes and we also pick up a better interface between PLM, Bell Labs and the MPPC," he said.

To better understand how the development organization will help us today, one should know how PECC functioned before divestiture, McLean said. PECC was an "interface" which worked with PLM and Bell Labs. While PLM researched and reported on the kinds of products the market was demanding and Bell Labs was designing and developing new products, PECC was charged with turning these ideas and developments into reality within the factories.

Furthermore, the PECC group that serviced what used to be the Cable and Wire Division (of which Omaha was a part) was responsible for making sure "that designs and products were consistent in all of the factories" within the division, McLean said. The manufacturing locations in the division shared similar products and processes, and consistency was important.

After divestiture, however, product lines were consolidated at single sources and the



Photo by Debbie Houston, Atlanta Works

*PUT TO THE TEST . . . Before testing an Omaha Works-made 2000 closure to see if it can hold its pressure, department chief Gerry Wood and development engineer Ron Monroe of the Engineering Development Organization apply a seal. The closure will be subjected to extremes of temperature and humidity in an apparatus evaluation lab chamber in Atlanta.*

importance of that aspect of PECC's responsibilities diminished. The need grew, meanwhile, for a strengthened product development group to serve the individual locations.

Thus, the decision was made to restructure the PECC staff with direct accountability to Phoenix, Atlanta and Omaha. In the case of the Omaha Works, the development organization will focus its efforts on our electronic wire and cable, metal fabrication and apparatus product lines.

"One objective is to introduce new products to Omaha quicker than before," McLean said.

### Labs in Atlanta

Agreeing with McLean is Gerry Wood, a department chief with the new Engineering Development Organization. He oversees

copper apparatus products and process development engineering.

For him the restructuring will mean more traveling between his home in Atlanta and Omaha. The reason the organization's staff is staying in Atlanta is because of its proximity to PLM, MPPC and Bell Labs offices, and because of testing and model shop facilities located there. The testing labs and model shops are located.

Wood doesn't see distance as a

hindrance to the goals of the organization and the Omaha Works. Currently his department is working closely with the Works on 2000 series closures and DSX connecting blocks. And he said it is developing ways to cut costs of making old and new products and their associated processes.

"We are 100 percent committed to working with the others on the Omaha team to develop and introduce new products for the Works."

# Orphaned doe finds a new home

**T**hey're coming from near and far to see a real-life version of Disney's Bambi. In this case, Bambi is really named Bucket, and it's a she, not a he.

But like Bambi, Bucket was orphaned when she was only three days old. When State Game Commission employees found her, they knew just where to take her: to the countryside home of Virginia Barker, not far from Mead, Neb.

If you know Barker, you know she has pets of all kinds, from a Chinese pug dog to cats to colorful and exotic birds. The Dept. 243 assembler is licensed to raise wild turkeys, pheasants, ducks and geese, so game commission employees knew the baby doe would be in good hands.

When they brought the frail whitetail deer to Barker almost two months ago, she knew nothing about how to care for the animal, she said. The doe was in shock and wouldn't eat.

Mixing human baby formula with a milk substitute, Barker coaxed the doe to feed from a plastic bottle. She tucked the bottle under her neck to mimic breastfeeding by the deer's mother. She held the doe on a heating pad and petted her during frequent feeding attempts.

With helpful suggestions from the Henry Doorly Zoo staff, Barker's efforts began to pay off. As the doe began to eat, she became stronger. Before long she was showing signs of wanting to play and, whenever "Mama" Barker was around Bucket followed her everywhere.

## A unisex name

The doe's name is a compromise between "Buck" for a male and "Buckette" for a female. "We weren't sure at first which she was," Barker said. Since those early days, however, Barker and her family have learned much more about the deer than just her gender.

One of the most surprising

discoveries about caring for a supposedly wild animal is behavior one normally associates only with domesticated animals, Barker said. A notable example is how quickly the doe became house-trained.

"We have made a bed in a box for her in our bedroom," she said. (To people who wonder why she keeps such an animal indoors she says, "Well, where would you keep a tiny baby?") From day one Bucket has never had "an accident" inside the home and waits to go outside to grassy turf. She waits by the door much like a dog or cat.

## Friendly family

Although she still shies away from human strangers initially, Bucket was never fearful of Barker's many other pets. She likes to play with Mai Tai the pug and has developed a special friendship with the kitten Yo-yo.

"It's not unusual to see Yo-yo climb all over Bucket," Barker said. Often the kitten will lie

still while the doe licks and cleans Yo-yo's fur.

By far the doe's best friend is Barker: "She's excited to see me when I come home from work and as I said, she follows me everywhere." Bucket expresses her joy in seeing Barker by making whining noises not unlike a puppy.

Playing hide-and-seek outside is one of Bucket's favorite games. Barker hides behind a tree or bush "and you can see Bucket's nose sniffing the air." When she finds Barker she reacts like the typical jubilant deer, leaping in the air and shaking her head.

There's plenty of room for the deer to run in Barker's spacious yard, all of which is enclosed by fence. Barker, husband Jim and father-in-law Dale have even erected cattle panels above the four-foot fencing in a special enclosed area, so the doe can stay outside safely.

Barker said she has found the opportunity to care for the animal both educational and

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# The buck really does stop here

**T**wo Omaha Works quality of work life (QWL) circles have introduced new ways to save the company substantial production costs and keep our customers happy.

Circle No. 3 (The 710 Connection) has begun a plan that will save the Works at least \$65,000 a year by conservative estimates, while Circle No. 8 (The Lightning Strikers) has put a seemingly simple idea to work that will save almost \$13,000.

Circle 3 tackled a problem pertaining to molded plastic parts used in connector manu-

facturing operations in Dept. 243. When a defective part was discovered, follow tickets attached to tubs of parts would specify which day the part was made, the operator and machine in molding Dept. 222.

The problem, said circle leader Dan Dehning, was that one machine may have produced 15 or 16 tubs on a given date. "We had to go through all of the tubs to find out which had faulty parts."

The tubs didn't necessarily all go to the same work area. Some would go to the storeroom, some to the color code area, others to assembly — six areas in all. Just when one thought all of the defective parts were pulled, another tub of bad parts often showed up later from a different area during the manufacturing sequence.

It was costing money, Dehning said. Although the molding department has a fine record of producing good quality parts,

enjoyable. Many of her friends and neighbors are sharing her enthusiasm.

She has welcomed a number of her co-workers (among them Jerry Zenio who took the photos for this story) to her home when they come to see the doe. One neighbor even brought out-of-town company from California to see Barker's special houseguest.

### Something wild

The attraction seems to be the chance to see and touch an animal you couldn't get near in the wild, Barker said. She admitted she has grown fond of Bucket but she doesn't worry about a day that might come when they must part company.

"I know I'll have her for at least a year," she said. Turning her over to a children's petting zoo is unlikely at this point.

"But whatever ends up being her permanent environment, if she is content then I'll be happy."



Photo by Jerry Zenio, Dept. 546

*COMPANY FOR DINNER . . . Works employees Bob and Deanna Traugh (left and right) stopped by Virginia Barker's place during feeding time. Bucket, who is 18 days old in this photo, is fed during workdays by Barker's father-in-law, Dale Barker.*

even a small fraction of faulty parts can be costly by virtue of the thousands of connectors we manufacture, he pointed out. His department was losing money in scrapped connectors, but the biggest chink was in labor costs — time wasted making defective connectors and "detailing" for bad parts, not to mention time that could have been spent making good-quality connectors.

Circle member Dennis Fleming devised a numbering system for a series of follow tickets. The key to the system is sequentially numbering each tub from a given lot.

Now when a connector department employee finds a defective part, he or she can check the numbered tubs before or after the problem tub to see if they, too, contain defective parts. Sequential numbering pinpoints where the problem begins and ends without checking all of the tubs.

The circle also designed a follow sheet for the molding department to use. It helps trace who and which machine produced a tub of faulty parts, which tool was used, and whether or not that tool was used for a later molding operation.

In the first four months of 1986, "scrap has really dropped — about 54 percent," Fleming said.

Circle 8 addressed a problem affecting employees making 3B protectors in Dept. 246. Department packers use stamps to mark boxes, identifying one of 15 different codes of protectors packed inside. The stamps were kept in no particular order in a desk drawer and some of them were worn out.

Jo Ann Alback, the circle's assistant leader, said it took time to find the stamp in the drawer and more time to correct an imprint by hand if the stamp was imperfect. There was the

possibility that a customer might not be able to correctly read some imprints. Some stamps were stencils using the packer's handwriting, leaving room for the possibility of marking down the wrong code digits.

Through the circle's efforts, new stamps were ordered, including stamps to eliminate the need for stencils. They were clearly marked and mounted on a pegboard in the packing area.

Simple? Yes. But the close to \$13,000 saved in wasted labor is no small matter. Alback said the hardest part was realizing this was a problem important enough for someone to "speak up and say something. No one knows your job better than you do."

To encourage more employees to speak up about a problem — big or small — the circle plans to place a suggestion box within the department, Alback said.

# Names change on the ball diamond

The Puttless Wonders, the Wrecking Crew, Nogas Floggers and Alien Jr. are just a few names of WEOMA Club sports teams that may catch your eye as you scan standings listed regularly in the club newsletter. There's generally a story behind the golf and bowling teams' names.

The men's softball league teams have stories behind their names, too, but some of the best apply to the nicknames given to team players. The

"giver" of these names is Terry Moore, a utility operator in Dept. 221. He has helped organize men's softball leagues for employees for close to 20 years, he said, and throughout that time he's been calling the players as he sees 'em.

Each week Moore's sports writeup of league play appears in the WEOMA newsletter, a colorful description complete with sports nicknames for the players.

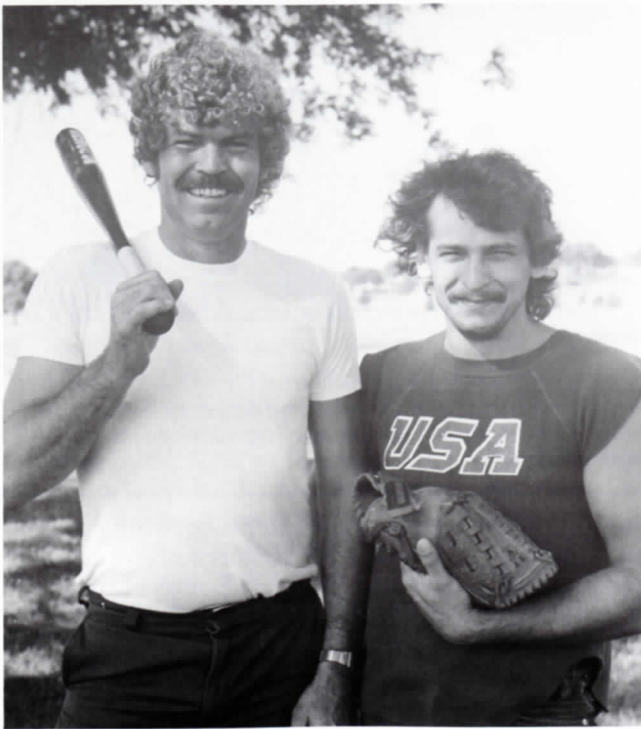
There's "Oil Can Tommy"

Furst of the Sluggo's team. An oiler in Dept. 541, "he's always walking around with an oil can in his hand at work," Moore explained. "Bad Bob" Bilek (Dept. 281) is "always in hot water for one reason or another" and Mike "The Hero" Huerta (Dept. 224) has made his share of game-saving plays.

Tom "Touch 'Em All" Vacanti (Dept. 225) once hit a homerun "and failed to touch third base, so it didn't count," Moore said. You can't have a team called the Local Yokals without "Hillbilly Phil" Filarecki, he continued, while "Terrible Terry" Godsey (Dept. 243) was so named "because it just sounded good."

"It's all in fun," said Moore, whose own nickname is "The Bird." Usually league players "get a kick out of the names" and look forward to seeing Moore's writeup in the newsletter.

Now that the average age of Works employees is older than in the past, Moore has found that his name assignments must extend to employee offspring. One example is Sam "Catfish" Martin whose son, Craig, also plays in the league. Sam's no-hit pitching ability gave him his nickname, after the great Yankees pitcher Catfish Hunter. So what's Craig's name? What else . . . "Minnow."



## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

... Is "Terrible Terry" Godsey (left) really terrible and is "Hillbilly Phil" Filarecki really a local yokal? Their names and others like "Jolly Jerry" Kucinski or "Mrs. Schwickerath's Son" (Glen) are part of playing softball.

## Assistant managers are named

The Omaha Works has three new assistant managers on its roll, and another has been transferred to a different location.

Jim LaFollette has been named quality engineering manager for Organization 080, effective since July 1. He formerly was a department chief for quality systems and development

engineering at the Oklahoma City Works.

Heading Organization 460 is E. F. ("JR") Newland, engineering manager for fabricated metal products. Newland, whose appointment was effective July 15, comes from the Atlanta Works where he was lightguide fiber manufacturing manager.

Ray Swartz has been promoted to engineering manager for wire and cable, effective since July 15. Now responsible for Organization 450, he was a department chief for development engineering based in the Atlanta Works.

Ralph Beisner, who has been engineering manager for the

Omaha Works' fabricated metal products, has relocated to the company's Berkeley Heights location in New Jersey. His assignment there as engineering and manufacturing technology manager was effective July 15.



Jim LaFollette



E.. F. ("JR")  
Newland

# Retirements

Not pictured:

Leon Slaughter — 26 years  
 Lee Doidge — 23 years  
 Marcella Vandeventer — 20 years



Bob Vtox  
37 years



Dorothy  
Updegraff  
20 years



Buddy Verbocy  
33 years



Jim Trenerry  
30 years



George Mokay  
28 years



Don Collins  
27 years

# Service anniversaries

## 35 years

A. J. Mackie 7/9  
 B. R. Nielsen 7/18

## 30 years

H. J. Allen 7/23  
 K. L. Batchelder 7/9  
 E. J. Hundt 7/23  
 C. C. Judds 7/23  
 W. F. Lewis 7/31  
 E. T. Saab 7/2  
 J. A. Trenerry 7/9

## 25 years

J. L. Ellis 7/22  
 J. C. Jansen 7/5  
 P. A. Lochren 7/31  
 W. H. Mason 7/5  
 S. O. Tedford 7/31  
 L. F. Tritsch 7/3  
 J. W. Tyler 7/28

## 20 years

T. J. Dekeuster 7/3  
 R. M. Griswold 7/18

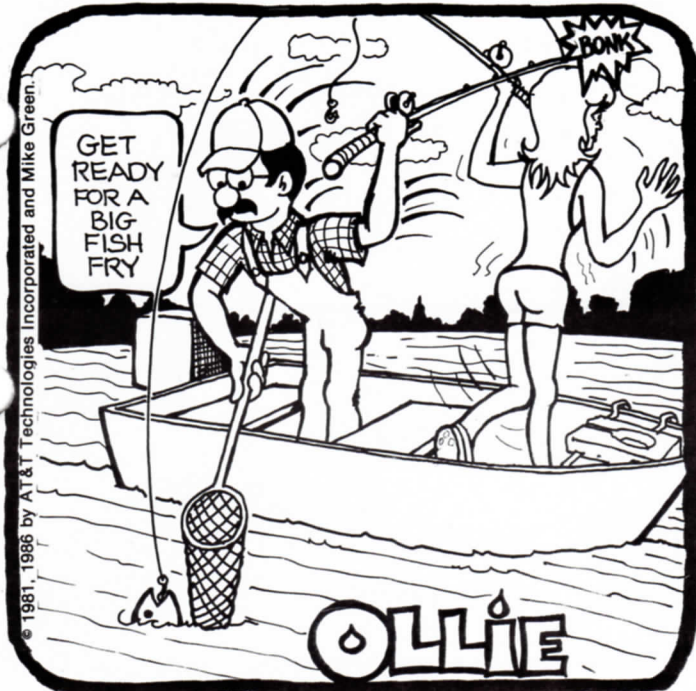
R. L. Hynes 7/6  
 D. R. Landholm 7/5  
 M. R. Leal 7/11  
 M. D. Mejstrik 7/12  
 B. S. Miller 7/5  
 L. S. Osby 7/12  
 G. E. Rezek 7/12  
 M. M. VanArsdale 7/5  
 J. E. Vanderheiden 7/5

## 15 years

E. M. Lynch 7/15

## 5 years

L. C. Cashoili 7/28  
 L. A. Vlcek 7/24





## Last frame

Anyone who drives past the front of the Omaha Works' office building can't miss seeing the burst of color beneath the flagpole. An array of colorful flowers has been planted along

the circular path at the base of the pole.

In past summers, several plantings have adorned the pathway, but nothing as spectacular as this year's flower garden. Bright yellows, reds and purples are visible even from L Street to the south of the plant.

When the decision was made this year to create a floral oasis on the grounds' grassy oval,

the Works contracted with a local nursery to do the planting and maintenance. Lanoha Nursery employees Michelle Lalley (left) and Vicky Selk tend to the flower bed regularly to pull weeds, water and clip old blooms.

The showy display includes red and white geraniums, "sunshot" marigolds, purple and white ageratum and cannas.



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