

see page 3



# Absenteeism: What's The Solution?

"For 10 years I couldn't financially afford to miss a day of work, now it's a habit," commented Roland Michaelson, a tool and die maker in Department 241.

Roland's 10-year habit has resulted in nearly 16 years of perfect attendance. The other individuals interviewed have achieved four or more years of perfect attendance.

It's my responsibility to be here just as it's the Company's responsibility to provide a safe area to work and a regular paycheck.

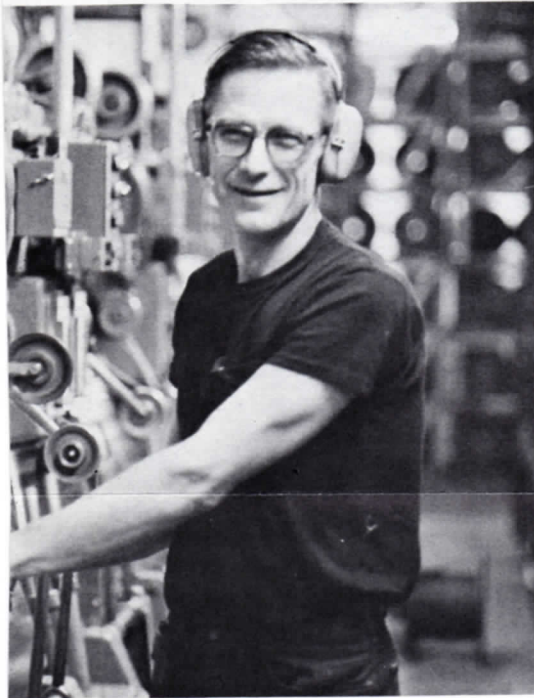
"If I can expect that out of them, then they can expect me to be here."

Gene Marick, a twister operator in Department 252, has three very good reasons for maintaining good attendance.

is a part of his personal attitude.

"I have never had a write-up and I don't ever want one," he stated. "I like to keep my record clean. The Company has never had to cover my job in five years due to my being absent."

Roland, Mel, Gene, Grace and Dick are proud of their records. The Omaha Works does in fact have a



Gene



Roland



Mel



Grace



Dick

All five people are representative of what is hopefully a growing number of employees who pride themselves on good attendance.

In 1972, the Omaha Works chalked up 97,232 days of absence which equates to an average of 403 people who didn't report for work every single working day.

What encourages a person to come to work? Do people really value good attendance records? Is there a secret to good attendance?

"I'm fortunate enough never to have encountered difficulties at home in the way of illness or family problems," Roland stressed. "Now my attendance record is a matter of pride to me."

Commented Mel Domina, a tester in Department 481, "This is my job.

"Sometimes I feel that if I start to stay home I will set a pattern for my three sons to follow.

"It's more or less myself that makes me come to work. I'll be here even if I'm not feeling too good. And once you maintain good attendance after about a year, then you get a good thing going."

"I like what I'm doing," noted Grace Rupe, a coil winder in Department 144. "Besides, I have always been taught since I was young that you should come to work. My mother set that example."

Grace added, "If I'm not sick, I figure I should come to work. So I do. A person has to work to survive. And I have a family to support."

For Dick Schroeder, a layout operator in Department 251, attendance

number of records in manufacturing and service to be proud of. Attendance, however, is not one of them.

CURRENTLY, AMONG WESTERN ELECTRIC'S 23 MANUFACTURING LOCATIONS, THE OMAHA WORKS RANKS THE WORST IN ABSENTEEISM.

Due to the gravity as well as complexity of this problem, the Omaha Works has formulated an Absence Control Committee chaired by Jack Rusthoven, assistant manager, 140 sub-branch.

The committee meets regularly to review the ongoing administration of the Absence Control Program to see what can be done about reversing the adverse trend of absenteeism.

# Service Anniversaries



John A. Lever  
40 Years  
4-9-33



Robert D. Groth  
30 Years  
4-14-43



Clarence W.  
Hanson  
30 Years  
4-18-43



Wayne J. McIntosh  
25 Years  
4-3-48



Henry W. Zyck  
25 Years  
4-5-48

Robert L. Jordan  
20 Years  
4-2-53

Darryl A. Ruhl  
20 Years  
4-14-53

Glenn G. Dormer  
20 Years  
4-22-53

## Weoma Club Party Slated

**Paper Dolls**, a dinner and fashion show sponsored by the Weoma Club for female employees and wives of employees, will be held on Thursday, April 26.

The evening at Anthony's Restaurant also includes a demonstration of Hatha Yoga by Jodie Williamson and the guest appearances of Big Red football notables Joe Blahak and Bill Janssen.

Ticket information is available in the Weoma Club office.

**WAITING  
For A Return Call?  
Why Not Dial Again  
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE  
334-4008 (Day or Night)**

## On The Cover

On March 15, the 250,000th #5 crossbar frame was shipped from the Omaha Works.

This type of frame has been produced in Omaha since 1956 and among those people associated with the initial production are those pictured on the cover of this issue.

A number of these people, all employees in Department 431, still work in some capacity on this product.

They include Glenn Anderson, Charles Blanchard, Bob Coffman, Glen Gutridge, Mike Kelly, Tom Lutzi, Lloyd Reed, Ken Sanders, Don Sopcich, Don Taylor, Gene Wahl and Dale Wichman.

The 250,000 #5 crossbar frames represent a monetary value of approximately \$750,000,000.

**the  
westerner**  
Volume 17 Number 4

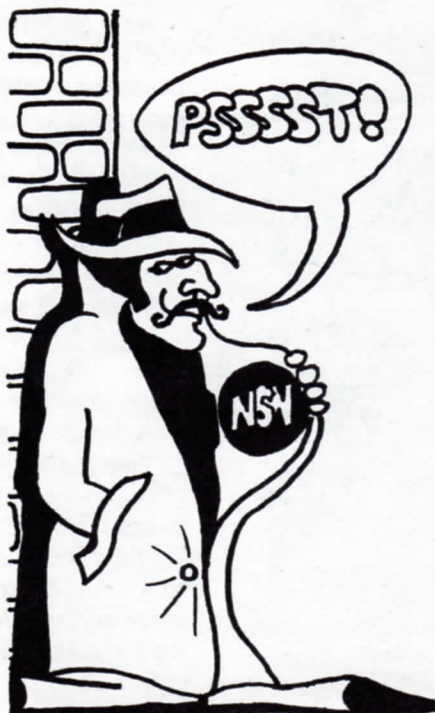
**Frank J. Lefebvre**  
General Manager  
Western Electric - Omaha Works

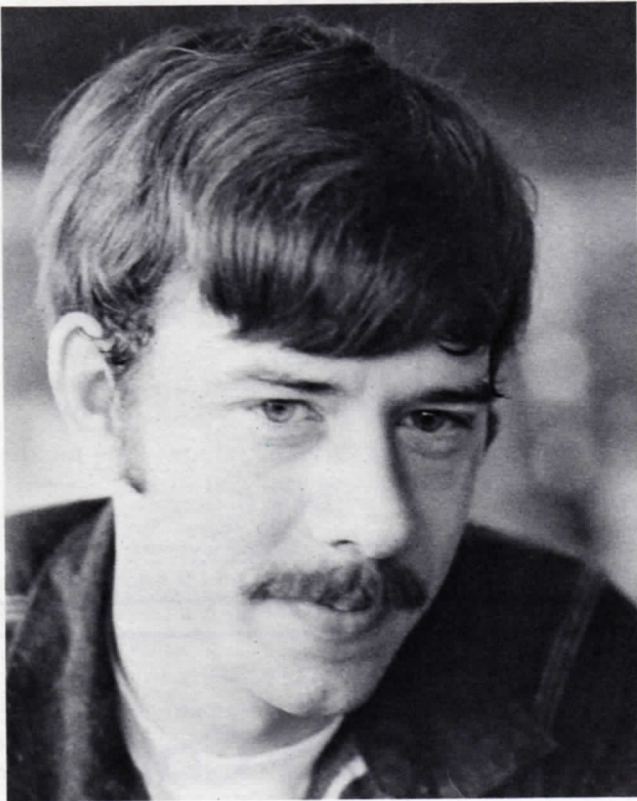
**Nancy Emshwiller**  
Editor

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Jerry

## Rich and Jerry Had This Idea ...

The fact that Jerry Giesing and Rich Miller just won a \$1,625 suggestion award may not be quite as interesting as the fact that they'd be willing to hand that money back today.

Both men agree that the change implemented as a result of an idea they jointly submitted to the Suggestion Committee is worth more to them than money. Both are machine operators in Department 141.

"My attitude about this particular job has changed," Rich admitted. "The change resulting from our suggestion has made the job more desirable."

Jerry and Rich proposed that once 095 spacers come out of the compression molding presses the excess plastic fragments be eliminated by placing the spacers in a machine which air blasts pellets to remove the fragments.

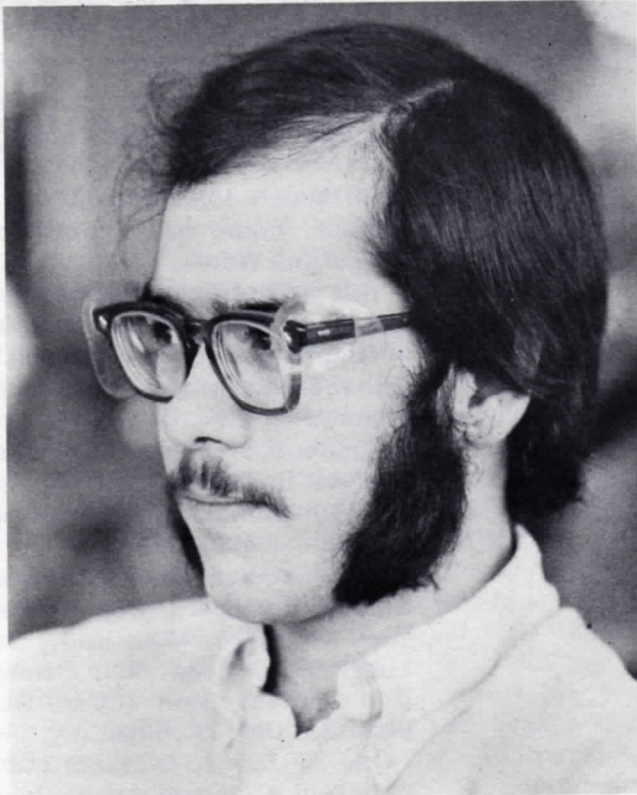
At the time the suggestion was made the excess plastic was being removed by hand.

As a direct result of the men's idea, one operator can now run eight presses rather than four as was the previous method.

"We submitted the suggestion in order to make the job easier, not to make money," Rich stressed.

"I'd give the money back rather than return to the old method," Jerry added. "If for no other reason, a suggestion is worth submitting if it will make your job easier."

Rich



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## 33 Pints Equal A Lot of Giving

November 14, 1958, the Bloodmobile visited Omaha Works for the first time.

After 17 years and 33 units of blood later one of Omaha Works' original donors still makes regular visits to the Bloodmobile.

Jerry Mallory, a layout operator in Department 252, recently gave his 33rd donation to the Red Cross. He was one of 566 employees who donated blood on March 1 and 2 in the Omaha Works Bloodmobile.

Jerry's philosophy on donating is simple. "You must have a feeling," he explained, "that it would be hell for someone to die just because there was no blood available."

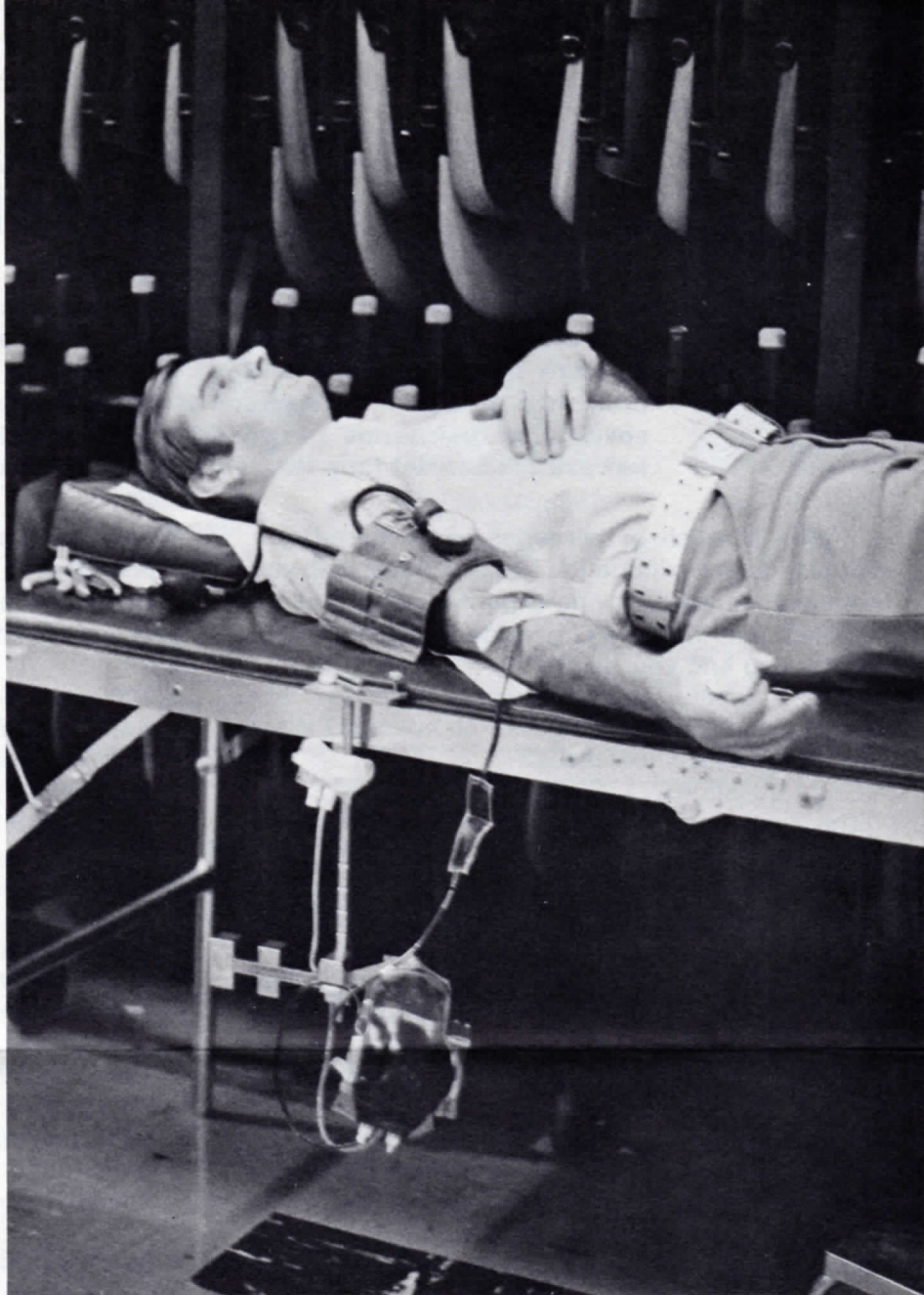
It is a well-known fact today that blood, for the most routine types of operations, is in critically short supply in some parts of the country.

"I just want to do my part," Jerry emphasized.

Doing his part means paying regular visits to the Bloodmobile. At the Omaha Works that means giving a unit of blood three times a year. On those three occasions a year when you lose some minus a pint of blood, he really now it's all worth it. Because at home there's a wife, Carole, and four Mallory children, 12, 10, 8 and 6.

It's because Jerry's life is worth so much to his family he's willing to give a little of himself.

That's probably a very logical reason why, on either August 9 or 10, Jerry will be back. And the Red Cross will be a little luckier for it.



Top left, the first phase in donating is providing the necessary medical information. Top right, in a matter of minutes, Jerry donates his 33rd pint. Opposite, a cup of coffee and a roll finish off his day. Above, on the job in 252.

# The Basic Hospital - Surgical - Medical Plan

This is the second in a series of articles prepared by the Headquarters Benefit Organization describing the highlights of the Western Electric Benefit Program. The articles are intended to promote a general understanding of the various plans and cannot cover all of their terms and conditions. Full details are available, however, in booklet form from your local Benefit Department.

In the first article of this series we discussed your sickness disability benefits. These benefits help you to meet your regular living expenses when you are disabled, and in this way provide financial protection for you and your family.

"That's great," you're probably thinking, "but what happens if I have to go to the hospital? What about my medical expenses?"

Good questions.

The cost of medical care is one of the fastest rising items measured by the government's consumer price index. The charge for a semi-private hospital room has almost doubled in the last five years. In some parts of the country it has risen to as much as \$115 a day. And that charge is just for room and board. It doesn't include such items as the use of the operating room, x-rays, medication and other routine services and supplies which are usually required during even the shortest hospital stay for the most ordinary illness.

With medical costs at their current level and rising almost daily, a person can't afford to be without some form of health insurance. And just being sick is worry enough, without having to be concerned about the expense.

Fortunately, as a regular employee of Western Electric, you are eligible to hospital-surgical-medical insurance under a Company group plan. All Company locations offer the HSM (*Blue Cross-Blue Shield*) plan.

In those areas where suitable facilities are available, an alternate plan, generally referred to as a prepaid health insurance plan, is offered. If a prepaid plan is available in your area, you have received a brochure describing the plan and a comparison sheet showing the differences between HSM and the prepaid plan. In view of this, and since the various prepaid plans differ somewhat, we will not attempt to explain them in this article; we will, instead, discuss the HSM plan which covers most of our employees.

The following questions and answers present the highlights of the HSM plan and explain the different types of contracts and some of the claim filing procedures.

## What are the Hospital (*Blue Cross*) Benefits provided by HSM?

Some of the hospital charges paid in full whenever you are admitted for treatment as an in-patient are:

- 120 days in a semi-private room during each confinement period. (*A confinement period is a single hospital stay of 120 days or a series of hospital stays which add up to 120 days. A new confinement period starts whenever two hospital stays are separated by 90 days.*)
- use of operating and recovery room and equipment
- laboratory and x-ray examinations
- drugs and medicines prescribed for use while you are hospitalized
- anesthesia supplies and administration of anesthesia by a hospital employee  
(*The HSM booklet, which you can obtain from your benefit representative, contains a list of many other in-patient services covered by Blue Cross.*)

## How about Out-Patient Hospital Care?

Charges for out-patient hospital care are paid for emergency treatment within 72 hours after accidental injury, for sudden and serious illness, and for minor surgery.

## What are the Surgical-Medical (*Blue Shield*) benefits?

The Blue Shield part of your HSM plan reimburses 80% of the "customary and reasonable" charges of your physician for surgery and hospital care. Minor surgical procedures, x-rays and laboratory tests performed in your doctor's office are also covered.

In determining what is "customary and reasonable" Blue Shield takes into consideration the customary fee which your physician most frequently charges the majority of his patients for a similar service or procedure; and any unusual circumstances or medical complications requiring addi-

(continued on next page)

tional time, skill, and experience in connection with a particular service or medical procedure.

**Does the HSM plan have any limitations or exclusions?**

Yes.

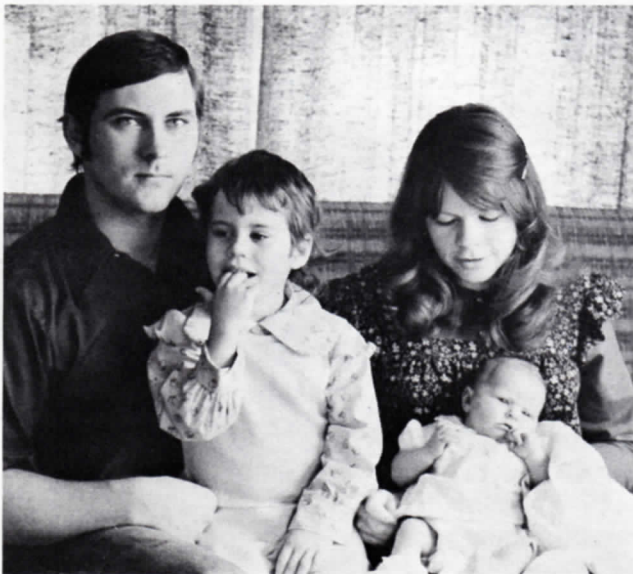
- No benefit is paid for services received or for a hospital stay which began prior to the effective date of your coverage, and hospital and medical benefits for pregnancy-related conditions generally are not effective until 270 days after the effective date of the contract.
- The hospital confinement period for pulmonary tuberculosis, mental and nervous conditions, alcoholism and drug addiction is limited to 30 days. Hospital stays for these conditions must be separated by 180 days before reinstatement of the 30-day confinement period.
- Routine health examinations, regular dental care and private duty nursing care are not covered by HSM.
- The plan will not duplicate payments made by another health insurance plan for which an employer pays a portion or all of the cost or makes payroll deductions for the cost.

*(A more complete list of exclusions is shown in your HSM booklet.)*

**Who is eligible for coverage under the HSM plan?**

All regular employees and retirees under age 65 and their qualified dependents under age 65 are eligible for HSM coverage. There are three types of contracts:

- The *individual* contract which covers just the employee
- The *family* contract which covers the employee;



Newborn Rachelle Hartley is a WE benefits baby. Her mother is Rachel, a wireman in Department 482, her dad is Allen, a tester in Department 481 and her proud sister is four-year-old Cindy.

his or her spouse; and dependent, unmarried children until the end of the year in which they reach age 19 (*over 19 if they are physically or mentally incapable of self-support*)

- The *sponsored* contract which provides the same benefits as the individual contract and covers an employee's unmarried child from the end of the year in which the child reaches age 19 until the end of the year in which he or she becomes 23.

**How much does HSM coverage cost?**

- For employees with six months or more of Company service, individual and family coverage is free—the premiums are paid by the Company. New employees must pay the monthly premium until they attain six months of service. (*Premiums vary according to the experience group. Your benefit representative can tell you the premium for your group.*)
- All employees must pay the full premium for sponsored contracts.

**How do I submit my Blue Cross-Blue Shield claims?**

You should present your Blue Cross-Blue Shield identification card whenever you or a covered dependent enters the hospital. The hospital will then send your claim directly to Blue Cross. You are asked to pay only for services not covered by our Blue Cross plan. In the majority of cases, these charges are limited to the difference between the charge for a semi-private and a private room, television rental and telephone calls.

Your physician will assist you in filing your Blue Shield claims. You will be asked to provide personal information, such as your address, the name of your employer, name of patient, etc., and the identification number on your Blue Cross-Blue Shield card.

Your benefit representative can answer any further questions you might have regarding HSM. Be sure to contact your representative whenever you have an enrollment change (*a change from an individual to a family contract, the enrollment of new-born or adopted children, or any other change affecting the number of dependents covered by your contract*).

The HSM (*or optional prepaid*) plan will usually take care of most of the expenses of an ordinary illness requiring hospitalization or for emergency care in the out-patient department of a hospital.

But what about the unusual or chronic illness that results in medical expenses over and above those covered by our basic hospitalization plans? The Company's Extraordinary Medical Expense Plan (EME) was designed to help pay these expenses. We will discuss the EME plan in the next article in this series.

# 167 Years Of Service Four Employees Retire

Floyd Kemper, Andy Anderson, Russ Burton and John Mack recently retired from the Omaha Works.

Floyd joined Western Electric in 1929 as an installer in Columbus Ohio. In 1930 he joined the Hawthorne Works as a switchboard engineer.

Throughout his Western Electric



**Floyd  
Kemper**

career, Floyd held various positions at Hawthorne, Duluth and Indianapolis. These jobs included section chief and department chief.

In 1958 he was transferred to the Omaha Works where he was promoted to assistant manager in 1963. At the time of his retirement he was assistant manager, Engineering Crossbar A&W Shops.

Floyd's retirement is effective April 21 following five weeks of vacation.

Andy began his Western Electric career in 1929 as an office boy at



**Andy  
Anderson**

Hawthorne. In succeeding years he held the positions of messenger, draftsman and section chief, Purchasing.

When he was transferred from Hawthorne in 1956, he was serving as department chief, Purchasing.

At the Omaha Works, Andy was promoted to assistant manager,

Purchasing, in 1957. He was resident purchasing agent at the time of his retirement.

Andy's retirement, preceded by five weeks of vacation, is effective



**Russ  
Burton**

April 21.

Russ first held the position of cost estimator when he joined the Hawthorne Works in 1930. He was subsequently named manufacturing engineer and, in 1951, was promoted to section chief.

In 1952 Russ was transferred to Winston-Salem where he was



**John  
Mack**

named department chief.

In 1957 he transferred to the Omaha Works where he was serving as department chief in 702 at the time of his retirement.

Following five weeks of vacation, Russ' retirement is effective May 1.

John joined the Hawthorne Works in 1937 as a bench hand. He also held the positions of machine operator and maintenance electrician.

In 1957 John was transferred to the Omaha Works as a field representative and in 1958 was promoted to section chief in Department 245. He was serving in that capacity at the time of his retirement.

John's retirement, following five weeks of vacation, is effective May 1.



## Teams Seek Quality Goals

The Omaha Works has announced the formation of 48 quality teams to maintain quality assurance in 1973.

The teams meet on a regular basis, the primary purpose being to solve problems in specified areas.

Pictured above at one of the recently-initiated quality team meetings are, from left, Ed Franks, operating section chief, 251; Bob Urban, SQC engineer, 264; and Dick Huffman, inspection section chief, 263.

Not pictured are team members Glen Hazard, inspection results investigator, 263; and Len Kovar, manufacturing difficulties investigator, 250 sub-branch.

Operating section chiefs head up the various quality control teams.

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