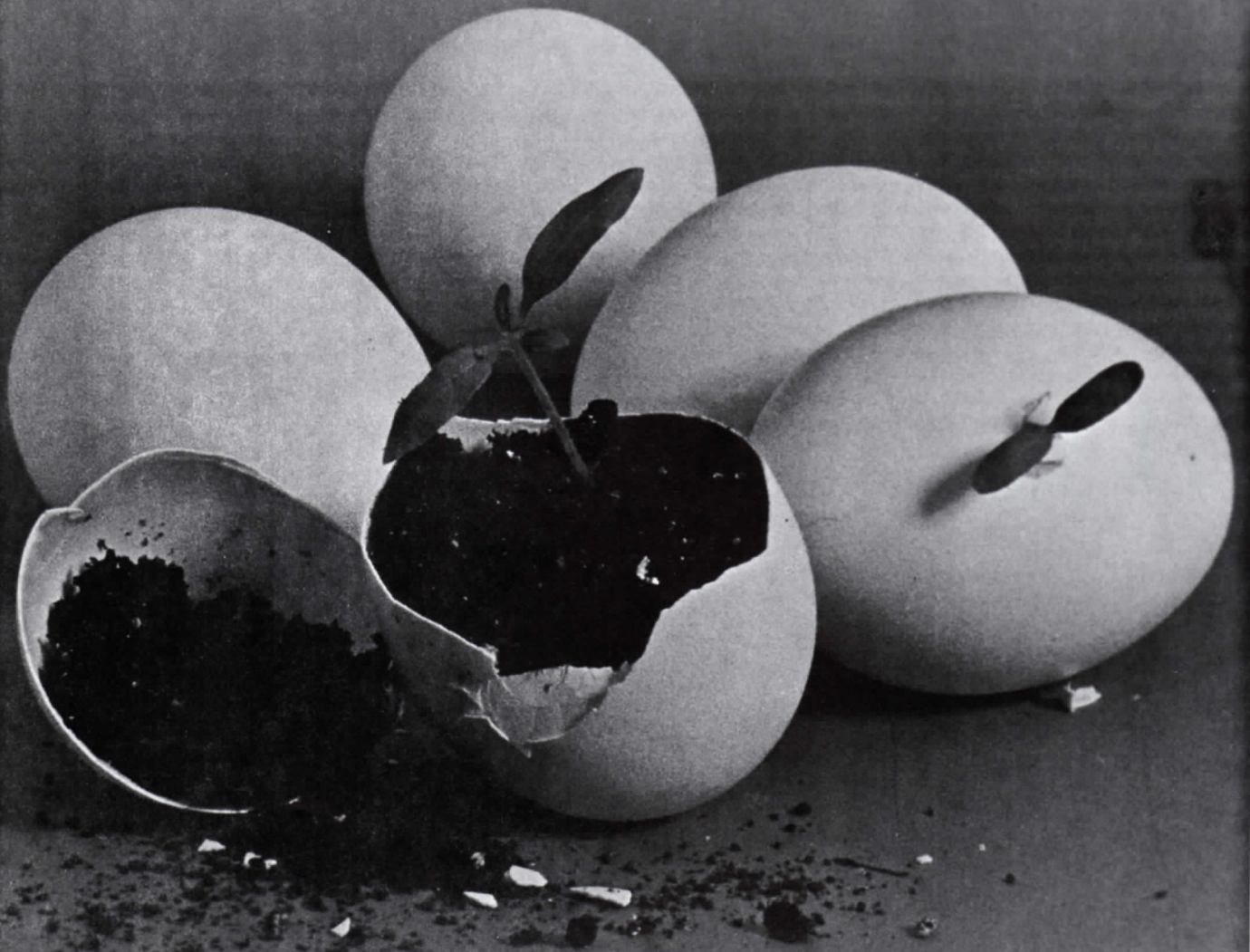


# the Westerner

Omaha Works  
March, 1982



# for your information

The Western Electric Fund Board of Trustees has approved a change in the Western Electric Matching Gifts Program.

Effective April 1, 1982, the Western Electric Fund no longer will match contributions to schools of higher education whose **prime interest** is to educate religious leaders.

What this means is that gifts made to seminaries, theological institutions, Bible colleges or similar religious schools that grant sectarian or divinity degrees will not be matched.

This change is in line with the general guidelines of the fund's support to higher education. It follows the practices of most corporations, including AT&T...

... You still have a few days left (until April 2, 1982) to purchase annual memberships to the Henry Doorly Zoo at \$25 each. That's a \$5 discount. The membership entitles free admission to the zoo during its 1982 season for the member and immediate family. Normally, single admittance to the zoo costs \$3.60 for adults and \$1.35 for children ages 5 to 11.

If you haven't already been contacted by the zoo membership solicitor in your subbranch and want to buy a membership, contact Jim Woods, Ext. 3411...

... Have you picked up the local daily lately and exclaimed, "Hey, that's us!"? Then you've probably noticed the full-page newspaper ads that began running in mid-February, designed to build public awareness of Western Electric's role in the changing Bell System — the "Information Age." Radio commercials also have been part of the advertising campaign.

Omaha is one of 20 locations in the country where the ads are being featured. The present campaign and some related future ads should extend into the third quarter of this year.

## Mall opening scheduled

The Omaha Works Employee Activities Mall in the main cafeteria is now complete. The mall, formerly cloaked in back vinyl sheets, while construction got under way, officially will open April 5.

The mall makes use of space in the northeast section of the cafeteria, without hampering the seating capacity of the cafeteria, said Bill Wunderlich of Dept. 732. Bill is an engineering

associate overseeing construction of the mall.

When the mall opens for business, employees will have at their disposal a number of convenience services in an atmosphere not unlike that of commercial shopping centers.

One of the "shops" in the new mall will be the Pioneer Store, relocated from space in Building 20. The new store will have more room to display goods, and customers will be served from a counter adjacent to the mall walkway.

Another "shop" will be a branch office of the Bell Federal Credit Union, complete with teller windows. Current plans call for the branch to provide full service Monday through Friday.

Also in the mall will be WEOMA Club and Cornhusker Chapter Pioneers administrative offices, relocated from offices in Building 20. An office has been set aside, too, for Phoenix Mutual Life Insurance Co. representatives to the Omaha Works.

Added features of the mall include a combined Pioneer/WEOMA meeting room, complete with audiovisual equipment for presentations, and a Pioneer/WEOMA workshop room. The workshop room will be used by Pioneers to work on their community projects and by the various WEOMA Club groups.

Built-in, glass-enclosed cases along the walls of the mall will house the Pioneers' antique collection of Western Electric products.

The mall is designed to provide a central location for the various employee services that will be offered. According to Bill Wunderlich, the Omaha Works is the only Western Electric manufacturing location that will provide services as complete as these all in a one area.



SMOOTH AND EASY... Rich Savicky of Dept. 744 was busy doing drywall work in preparation for the opening of the Employee Activities Mall.


BSSP/SSP results		
The following are the January unit values for both the Bell System Savings Plan (BSSP) and the Savings and Security Plan (SSP) for non-salaried employees:		
<u>BSSP</u>		
	Units Value	Units Credited Per Dollar
AT&T	2.7805	.3596
Government Obligations	2.5666	.3896
Equity Portfolio	1.8388	.5438
Guaranteed Interest Fund	1.2408	.8059
<u>SSP</u>		
	Units Value	Units Credited Per Dollar
AT&T	1.2988	.7699
Guaranteed Interest Fund	1.3374	.7476

**the Westerner**  
VOL. 26 NO. 3

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Editor

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 **Western Electric**

# service anniversaries

## march

### 35 years

H. L. Firebaugh	441	3/10
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### 30 years

E. L. Donahoo	441	3/20
L. T. Hurdiss	437	3/17
R. A. Kobza	253	3/24
J. L. Phillips	251	3/12
L. H. Roth	282	3/18

### 25 years

G. P. Anderson	251	3/4
J. Avery	361	3/23
M. P. Bizal	437	3/25
M. C. Brennan	725	3/29
E. M. Dixon	746	3/18
J. V. Goodbarn	755	3/25
J. W. Goodhard	282	3/19
R. L. Halliman	287	3/11
J. R. Healy	331	3/11
J. L. Howard Jr.	282	3/1
W. F. Johnson	362	3/25
R. E. Joppa	514	3/14
E. J. Karasek	253	3/28
J. P. Kelly	437	3/22
G. H. Kohlscheen	437	3/6
H. K. Loomis	744	3/11
R. D. Mallory	273	3/25
C. F. Mellick	253	3/30
A. F. Miles	514	3/1
N. M. Nemec	443	3/4
L. M. Reed	411	3/11

D. G. Scholer	743	3/4
D. G. Sheil	745	3/11
R. F. Sorensen	252	3/25
E. M. Stootsberry	361	3/18
K. D. Tracy	413	3/1
M. J. Widger	361	3/11
W. J. Wunderlich	732	3/16

### 20 years

W. J. Andrews	251	3/27
Z. W. Buzzard	445	3/19
E. C. Carlson	252	3/12
G. R. Cheshek	744	3/22
B. C. Conatella	437	3/21
S. T. Costello	725	3/6
E. A. Eby	728	3/23
E. J. Golda Jr.	439	3/19
P. O. Hartung	413	3/5
K. B. Hughes	437	3/4
D. D. Knoell	253	3/15
B. S. Kroeger	728	3/19
C. J. Miszuk	745	3/12
S. B. Moedhammer	413	3/28
C. R. Nading	524	3/31
R. S. Neneman	441	3/12
G. E. Pospisil	437	3/27
D. M. Veylupek	437	3/12

### 15 years

J. L. Detwiler	744	3/20
L. M. House	252	3/27
B. D. Lampkin	435	3/24

T. P. Lichliter	271	3/20
D. A. Linn	252	3/27
P. N. Moreno	445	3/29
R. H. Olderog	511	3/20
S. T. Sahulka	282	3/17

### 10 years

D. R. Arnold-Kelly	439	3/6
B. T. Davis	435	3/7
F. E. Davis	725	3/6
B. S. Heinke	445	3/16
B. K. Kirk	445	3/8
L. P. Nelson	439	3/21
E. L. Reimer	435	3/22

## energy...

### less is more

How much do you know about saving energy in your home? The following quiz, prepared by the National Home Builders Research Foundation, should give you an idea:

1. The most effective step to save household energy in an average home is to (a) blow insulation into exterior walls, (b) turn down water heater temperature setting, (c) insulate exposed pipes.

2. In buying insulation, specify it by (a) thickness in inches, (b) mineral wool or foam composition, (c) R-value.

3. The way to save energy during winter nights is to (a) raise furnace thermostat five degrees, (b) leave thermostat at normal temperature so home does not chill at night, (c) install a clock thermostat and set for 10-degree nighttime reduction.

4. The largest energy loser in a typical home is (a) fireplace, (b) refrigerator, (c) front door.

5. In a poorly insulated home, the most effective part to insulate is (a) attic, (b) basement or crawl space, (c) walls.

6. Sealing and insulating exposed heating ducts and water pipes in garage, crawl space or other unheated area will reduce heating costs up to (a) 1 percent, (b) 2 to 3 percent, (c) 5 to 10 percent.

7. Triple-glazed windows (insulating window plus storm) in place of single-pane windows will reduce energy loss by (a) 20 percent, (b) 40 percent, (c) 60 percent.

8. For maximum energy efficiency, windows should be (a) on east and west walls, (b) on south wall only, (c) on north and south walls.

**Quiz answers:** 1-b, 2-c, 3-c, 4-a, 5-a, 6-c, 7-c, 8-b.

## suggestion box

For the fifth year in a row, **Darrell Yenny** of Dept. 741 has earned a suggestion award of more than \$1,000. This time, Darrell was awarded \$5,035 for his idea modifying the drill and tap machines used on cores for miniature wire spring relays.

Darrell thinks any employee can earn a suggestion award, too, if he or she "just observes what's going on and thinks of a better way to do it. And everybody has a better way to do something," he said.

Another Works employee also recently received an award of more than \$1,000. **Richard Gregor** of Dept. 726 earned \$2,480 for his idea which would eliminate the need to have spools repaired by an outside supplier.

Other recipients of suggestion awards in past months include:

**Larry Christensen**, Dept. 201, \$860.

**David Howell**, Dept. 746, \$470.

**Lavern Stork**, Dept. 745, \$195.

**Howard Stroh**, Dept. 741, \$170.

**Harold Kozisek**, Dept. 201, \$100.

**Herbert Bass**, Dept. 439, \$100.

**Joseph Kessler**, Dept. 741, \$100.



PRESENTATION . . . Darrell Yenny (right) accepts his suggestion award from General Manager Bill Warwick.

# A president comes to town

One glance at his day's agenda indicated this was no time for him to wear ill-fitting shoes or have laryngitis.

The Omaha Works National Engineers Week planning committee invited Western Electric President Don Procknow to visit the Works Feb. 25, and he accepted.

The day's events included not only meeting with Works' technical professionals in the auditorium, but also addressing two other groups of representatives from hourly and salaried-graded, and non-tech-pro and supervisory personnel. Add to that staff meetings, a tour of the shops, meeting with Northwestern Bell executives and interviews with the press.

In his meetings with employees, Western's president congratulated the Works for being "one of the most productive and cost-efficient manufacturing locations in the company."

He complimented employees on their ability to adapt to changing conditions in the past. This ability to change "will be a key to success in the future," Procknow said, especially as the company enters further in the world marketplace where adapting to specific needs is essential to good business.

Referring to the company's future once the modified Consent Decree becomes effective, the president said we can be sure of one thing: The modification "opens up a whole new world for Western Electric."

In describing the future, he stressed four major points. First, we will be facing increased competition not only in our traditional business but also in new markets opening up to us. Second, with competition will be a greater challenge to keep our costs down while keeping our quality high.

Third, the modified decree will give Western the "freedom to make whatever products we want and to sell them to anyone we want." That freedom ties in with the fourth major point, the opportunity for a brighter future and growth.

After his talks to employee groups, Procknow opened up the meetings to

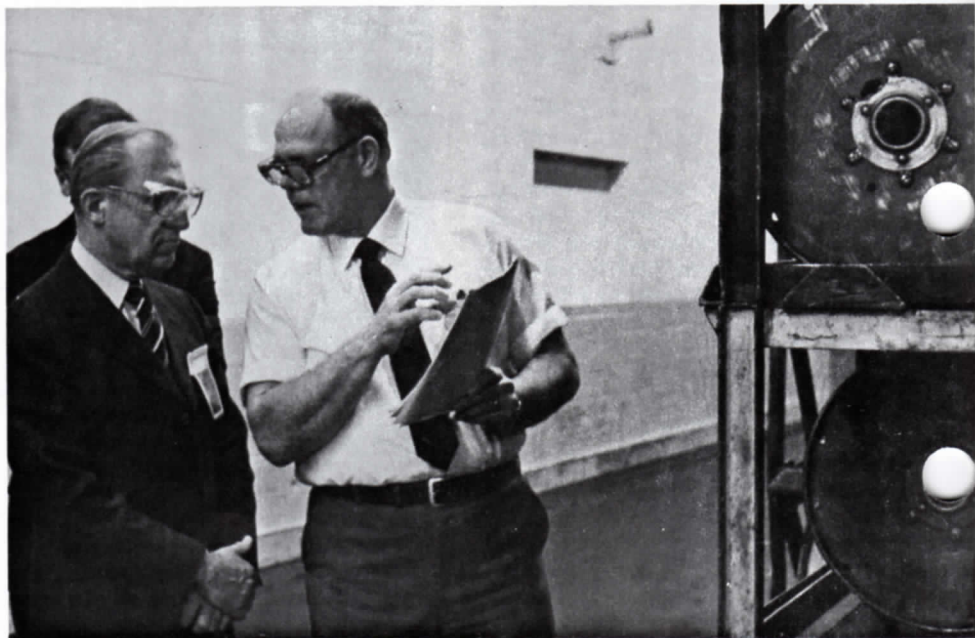
questions from the audience.

When asked if Western Electric plans to make more than just telecommunications equipment in the future, Procknow related a conversation he once had with a fellow airline passenger, an elderly woman. He told her he worked for Western Electric, to which she responded, "Oh, I've had one of your toasters for 10 years!"

Doubting that the company will be manufacturing anything as dramatically different as toasters in years to come, "People will know who we are," he quipped. He anticipates broader applications of telecommunications products we make and said "we will be looking at things with a fair return for our stockholders."

"I'm very optimistic about the future," he added. "The most significant thing any of us can do is build on the strengths we already have . . . and keep on doing the things **you're** doing so very well."

**MEET THE PRESS . . .**  
When you're the president of Western Electric, being surrounded by TV cameras and reporters is a common occurrence. Don Procknow spoke with news representatives from three Omaha TV stations and the daily newspaper before resuming his tour of the shops.



**TOGETHER AGAIN . . .** When Don Procknow (left) toured the shops, he was greeted in the cable shop by an old school chum, senior engineer Phil Lawler of Dept. 271. The two attended the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology in Rapid City in the early '40s.



Speakers highlight events

## Works observes E-Week

What a week it was. observance of National Engineers Week, Feb. 21 through 27, a slate of guest speakers was arranged to address Omaha Works technical-professionals throughout the week. They had been invited by the Works' "E-Week" planning committee, chaired by Larry Bailey of Dept. 475.

The president of Western Electric, Donald E. Procknow, met with the technicians on Feb. 25. He expanded his stay to include meetings with staff members and representative employee groups, as well as a shop tour.

Nebraska's Sen. Ed Zorinsky addressed the tech-pros in the auditorium on Feb. 26. Afterward, he took a brief tour of the shop and met with employees during lunch break in the main cafeteria.

Other scheduled speakers included Al Jowid, a space shuttle orbiter engineer

at the L. B. Johnson Space Center in Houston, Tex., who talked about the space shuttle program. Hank Bird, a research leader in robotics at Western Electric's Engineering Research Center in Hopewell, N.J., discussed the future of robotics.

During a special patent recognition ceremony, senior engineer Glenn Lange and engineering associate Denny Lynch (both of Dept. 476), were honored for having earned a joint U.S. patent during 1981. Plaques with their photos now hang in the Works' technical library.

A plant tour for the 200 tech-pros and their families and a skit spoofing the "age of robotics" rounded out the week's events.

The theme for this year's observance of National Engineers Week was "Engineers pioneering America's revitalization.



MEET THE PEOPLE . . . Sen. Ed Zorinsky caught a glimpse of the production of 710 connectors when he stopped to meet Eddie Adams, an assembler in Dept. 435.

# Bring on spring

You think you've got a bad case of spring fever?

Joan Powers, a SAM operator in Dept. 725, is so anxious for a change of season that as of the first week in March, she already had all of her spring house-cleaning done. "I'm ready to hit the garden," she explained.

She wasn't referring to a garden tucked away in the corner of a back yard. Rather, Joan and her husband, Bob, spend many of their after-work hours tending a garden that's roughly the size of a residential single-dwelling lot — 80 by 150 feet.

The couple lives in Elmwood, Neb., where they used to farm until several years ago. Now their agrarian skills are confined to a five-acre homestead peppered with fruit trees and Joan's pride and joy, the garden.

That garden produces enough vegetables for Joan and Bob to use in the course of an entire year. "I never have to buy any vegetables now," Joan said.

In addition, there are enough vegetables to provide for half of the needs of the Powerses' four grown children and their families, as well as frequent gifts of food to other relatives.

"My daughter pays about 63 cents for a small can of kidney beans. I tell her that she can come to my house and get them for nothing — and mine's a full quart," Joan pointed out.

**THE SAVINGS** realized from growing one's own vegetables is a large factor in the Powerses' commitment to home gardening. But even more important to Joan, however, is the chance to "get all that fresh air," she said, especially after being "locked up inside all day" at a job.

Joan also believes there is no better exercise than gardening, and apparently it's plenty of exercise at that.

The gardening cycle begins anew early in March when Joan and Bob prepare "hot beds" indoors. They start plants from seeds they buy or save from the previous year's crops. If the plants grow too fast, Joan stunts their growth simply by moving them to a less sunny location. "You don't want to plant them (outdoors) too early," she said, when there still may be a danger of frost.

In about late April, the couple transplant the seedlings outside, and plants other vegetables from seed or store-bought plants or sets. Joan said she and her husband really don't have any precise method to their planting, other than "plant until the seeds run out."

However, they purposely don't plant all of their seedling plants. In case frost does kill what they plant, they have plants in reserve.

Joan couldn't say exactly how many

varieties of vegetables they have in their garden, but it includes tomatoes, corn, peppers, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, various beans, squash and rhubarb, to name a few.

**AFTER THE** garden is planted, weeding becomes a nightly chore. It's not unusual for the Powerses to spend three or four hours in the evening pulling weeds or watering the garden. They prefer pulling weeds to using commercial weed killers, which Joan thinks harms the soil.

"And you have to keep up with the weeds," she said. "I've been known to use a flashlight at night to pull weeds if I know it's going to rain." The day after a rain, she insisted, weeds are twice the size of the day before.

By June, Joan and Bob begin freezing and canning some of their harvested produce. Their canning season lasts well into the winter, and they easily use close to 30 cases of canning jars — 12 jars to a case.

Some vegetables may be kept in a fresh state all year, Joan said. For example, she keeps carrots in clean, dry sand inside crocks with lids. Carrots give off moisture of their own, so she frequently "works the sand" inside the crocks to keep the sand dry and prevent

rotting.

She keeps sweet potatoes in boxes covered with clean rags, and white potatoes in wooden bins with screened bottoms to allow for air to circulate. It's important to "pop the sprouts" off white potatoes frequently, too, she said.

Although some gardeners prefer to plant their gardens based on systematic calculations of soil content, wind velocity and such, Joan said she and her husband have done well by using common sense and learning from their mistakes.

**THEY'VE DEVELOPED** a few gardening techniques of their own, such as sprinkling regular baking flour on vegetation to deter rabbits. It works as well as costly commercial preparations, Joan said.

Just last year, Joan discovered an easy way to pod kidney and lima beans. The tough pods quickly cause sore fingers when podding is done by hand, she said. The key is to let the pods dry

## Take a walk and name that tree

How many trees can you identify on the Omaha Works premises?

With approximately 230 acres of property available for landscaping, the Works has developed a kind of "mini arboretum" over a 24-year period.

Current estimates place the number of shade trees, ornamentals and evergreens on Works grounds at about 700. That's not even including shrubs.

According to plant investigator Charlie Rohman, who works with the landscaping service company contracted by the Works, an accurate count is almost impossible when so many trees are involved.

However, he pointed out that the variety of trees on the grounds certainly qualifies the Works as having one of the best examples of landscaping in a comparable area within metropolitan Omaha.

Along with Dave Perry of J. K. P. Landscaping Co., Charlie mentioned some of the Works trees that seem to draw the most interest and attention. One is an ornamental common smoke-tree, located on the east side of Building 50 in the mall area. The tree produces blossoms that look like dandelion flowers gone to seed.

A cluster of American linden trees on



**WHAT'S NEW?** . . . Joan Powers' love for vegetable gardening has spawned another related hobby. She collects as many seed and gardening catalogs as she can to keep up on the subject.

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on the plant, then collect into a gunny-sack.

"Then shake 'em up and even walk on them" and wait for a windy day, Joan said. "When the wind blows, hold the sack upside down over a big pot. The dry pods blow away and the beans fall into the pot below."

Joan hesitates to say gardening is a lot of work. "Time consuming" is a better term, she said, adding that she's convinced that anyone who starts gardening even on a small scale will soon understand why she finds her hobby so rewarding.

Many of the Powerses' neighboring farm families "think we're crazy to work at jobs all day then come home and work all evening in the garden," Joan said. Reflecting on how gardening gives her a chance for quiet thinking with only the faint sounds of diesel trucks in the distance, Joan said, "Maybe others would rather be out dancing. But I'd rather be in my garden."

---

the southwest corner of the grounds (at 132nd and L streets) has drawn the admiration of Douglas County Extension Service forester Dave Mooter, because of their symmetrical shape. In the fall, one Norway maple in particular stands out (along west end of the south access drive), looking like "a giant snow cone" of a reddish-orange hue.

The Minnesota native cutleaf weeping birch trees (in the mall and front of Building 20) — highly susceptible to pest infestation — are very unusual for this area.

Planting a variety of trees discourages the spread of disease leading to losses, Charlie and Dave said. Charlie and the landscape firm regularly inspect Works trees for wind damage, insects and disease and treat them accordingly. In the last several years almost 100 shade trees and evergreens were planted to replace dead trees or those removed for construction work.

Although both men said the best time to prune or plant trees is in the fall, spring is a good time for planting, too. They recommend buying disease-resistant varieties from reputable nurseries, and to soak — not just water — young trees about every two weeks during warm weather, to avoid shallow rooting and dryness.

The best places to seek help in tree selection and care, they said, are the city forestry office or the Douglas County Extension Service. Literature and advice are free.

"You'd be surprised at how many people don't know that that's why they're there," Dave remarked.

## Houseplants dress up the office

Houseplants may be an inexpensive way to decorate one's home, but in the work place, they more than decorate — they uplift spirits.

"Plants make the work area a little more colorful and less 'institutional,'" according to Joe Hiykel of Dept. 731.

He's right. If you walk past his office area on the second floor of Building 20, you can see how Joe's collection of plants along the window ledge somehow cuts the rigidity of workday living.

Perched on metal grid shelves are some 30 plants basking in southern exposure sunlight. He has pots of his favorite plants — begonias and coleus (because they either flower easily or offer rich colors) — and others including variegated jade, Christmas cactus, purple passion, philodendron, snake and spider plants.

Joe has found these varieties well suited to growing in an office setting because they may be kept in small containers for long periods without having to be repotted. Also, although his work area has the benefit of southern window light, most work areas lack natural sunlight. Some of his plants would do well in fluorescent lighting alone, he said.

Joe tends to his plants during his lunch break. In one of his large desk drawers he keeps potting soil, extra pots, liquid fertilizer and misters.

He also keeps water at room temperature in plastic bottles, to which he adds a few drops of liquid plant food. That way, when he waters his plants about once a week, he automatically feeds them too. The fertilizer helps prolong the time a plant can stay in the same



**OFFICE FOLIAGE . . .** Compared to the 100-plus plant cuttings Joe Hiykel has in his home, tending to his office plant collection requires little time.

pot without transplanting into new soil, he said.

He mists his plants regularly, removes dead leaves, and is constantly pinching back plant stems to encourage dense growth. He roots many of the cuttings in water, and gives them to interested co-workers.

Referring to the reaction of his co-workers to his hobby, Joe said, "I think they've kind of gotten used to it. Ray (Nowacki) used to cut off any trailing vines that came across his desk, but he's more tolerant now."

Joe explained why he takes the trouble to have plants at work: "I like to garden outdoors, and when you have an indoor job, it's nice to take the outdoors inside if you can."

There's another reason, too. After all, Joe is a plant engineering associate.

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## Policy affects attendance awards

Since January 18 of this year, a new policy affecting perfect attendance awards has been in effect.

An hourly or salaried-graded employee who has achieved one year of perfect attendance is now awarded a coupon redeemable at Omaha Steaks International. The coupon is good for six 10-ounce boneless sirloin strip steaks, valued at more than \$20.

The new policy is a departure from past procedure. Formerly, employees received a \$20 American Express check for their personal use.

Last year, it was determined that checks of this nature awarded to em-

ployees are considered taxable income by the federal government. So, the Omaha Works began issuing company checks for \$20 to employees with perfect attendance. In accordance with the law, an award-winning employee's next pay detail reflected taxes deducted for the \$20 award.

In January, steaks were first presented in lieu of \$20, with no taxes deducted for the award. They are not considered taxable income. The decision to present the steaks instead of a monetary award was made to ensure that an employee receives the full value of his or her award for perfect attendance.

# New safety campaign under way

"Safety's a winner" is the theme of the Omaha Works' 1982 safety campaign geared toward improving safe working habits in the manufacturing shop areas.

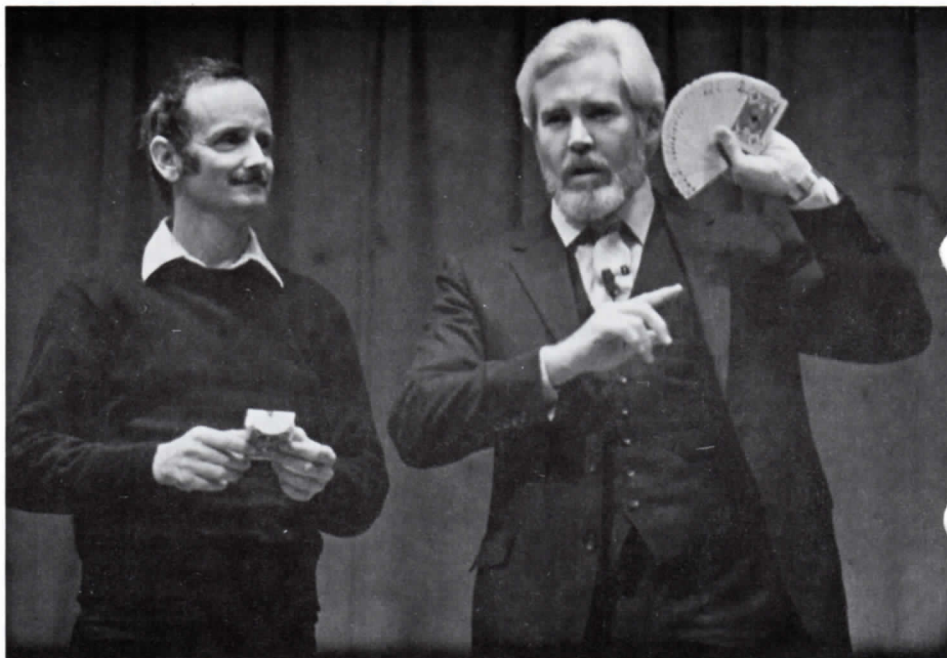
The campaign began March 15 and consists of a contest which will last for 36 weeks. Winners will be members of the shop subbranch with the best safety record for the 36 weeks.

The official kickoff for the campaign was March 10. Close to 3,000 hourly employees, who are participating in the contest, were divided into groups to attend one of 12 meetings in the Works auditorium.

The goals of the campaign were explained, then magician Dennis Rourke demonstrated there is nothing magical about being safe. Green T-shirts proclaiming the campaign slogan were awarded to a number of employees attending.

The contest works like this: Each shop subbranch is represented by a horse competing in the "run for safety." The horse's progress is determined by the subbranch's weekly safety record.

Points are added or subtracted from a subbranch total based on the kinds and number of injuries the subbranch has



TRUST ME . . . Magician Dennis Rourke (right) claims he's dealing with a full deck, but John Sutton of Dept. 745 isn't so sure during a safety campaign kickoff meeting.

avoided or experienced during each of the 36 weeks. The safer the subbranch, the more points accumulated.

Subbranches with higher accident risk are allowed a "handicap" to assure they have just as much chance to win as a subbranch with lower accident risk. The subbranch accumulating the most points wins the contest.

The safety department is distributing a "gold sheet" every two weeks to all shop

employees, informing them of the subbranches' progress. Prizes also are being awarded (a radio and binoculars) every two weeks within any subbranch having a perfect safety record for the two-week period.

At the end of the campaign, more prizes will be awarded. Each employee of the subbranch accumulating the most points will be able to choose from five different prizes.



THE GREEN T . . . Lucky Donna Steinpreis, an assembler in Dept. 723. She won one of the safety giveaway T-shirts at a kickoff meeting the day of her birthday.

## OLLIE OOPS

