

# WESTERNER

Omaha Works  
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## On the cover

And you think you have parking problems when you come to work? Imagine trying to find your bike among hundreds of others parked alongside it, and they all look alike. This is a typical parking area for workers at the Dalian Machine Tool Factory in Dalian, China. It was one of the places visited by engineer Jim Grabenbauer during his three-week stay in China as a member of a business delegation. More pictures and observations about his trip are in an article on Page 4.

## WESTERNER

Linda Ryan, editor  
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# Committee acts on training needs

**N**ot quite a year since its formation, the Omaha Works Training Committee has taken strides toward formalizing training programs that satisfy our current and future needs.

Those training needs have accelerated recently, noted committee chairperson Al Miles. He is department chief for Dept. 075, which oversees Works training programs. An influx of different products on the shop floor and employees on new jobs put greater emphasis on the importance of job training.

The committee was formed last August. Its members include operating and engineering supervisors as well as representatives from IBEW Local 1974. Their job is to research and ascertain which job training programs are needed and to set the wheels in motion to fulfill those needs.

A formalized training structure will ensure "consistent training for everyone," Miles said, "and make sure our engineering requirements are met."

## The goals

The short-term goal of the committee is to provide training associated with jobs being transferred from Hawthorne and Kearny Works locations. "In the long term, we hope to establish a certification process similar to the one used at the Kansas City Works," Miles said.

Training for certain Works jobs, such as welding or insulating machine operation, will result in certification. The way it works in Kansas City is that a certified employee cannot be replaced by any other than a certified worker with more service, said Ray Halliman,

section chief in charge of training.

Employees already in specified jobs will undergo formalized training to attain certification. This training generally will be conducted on company time.

But other employees who aspire to different or better jobs will have the opportunity to take certification courses on their own time, Halliman explained.

The committee focuses its attention on shop-related training courses, Miles said, although attention is given to other training programs as well. And it keeps abreast of training programs instigated by Miles's training staff, such as a Corporate Education Center (CEC) course taught locally — "psychology in industry" — and a "train the trainer" course. Miles's training organization designed the latter program to instruct selected shop and office employees who have the responsibility or potential to train other employees.

Once the committee determines areas in which training is needed, arrangements are made for instruction through an outside agency, such as Iowa Western Community College. Or, Miles' training staff handles instruction development and presentation.

## Many courses

In the past months, a number of programs have been considered, many of them begun and some completed. Miles highlighted several of them:

- Specialized sheet metal and piece part fabrication jobs training. The committee has looked at the machine shop facilities of Iowa Western Community

College to see if they would be suitable for a course pertaining to sheet metal and piece part fabrication. The college's instructors would teach the course, and classes would be scheduled to accommodate all Works shifts. Training, which would result in certification, would be for people already in metal fabrication jobs and those who aspire to openings as they occur.

Course work would begin in the summer if the subcommittee decides to use the college's facilities.

- **Blueprint and gauge reading course.** Two employee classes already have earned certificates in this 27-hour course taught by Iowa Western Community College teachers at Millard South High. Training is for potential machine operators in the Works' sheet metal and piece part shops. A class is scheduled this summer to accommodate second-shift employees.

- **Quality awareness training.** All Works employees have completed courses on quality awareness as it pertains to their job responsibilities. Conducted by the Works training staff and volunteers, the course spanned a six-month period. Follow-up includes a "hotline" number to be installed to field employee calls regarding quality problems, and periodic letters to employees with updates regarding quality in the workplace.

- **Injection molding training.** The Works training staff, in cooperation with the line organization, is developing a program for machine operators who work in injection molding (Dept. 425). Training is targeted to begin in mid-June.

- **Welder training.** Twenty



*PLANNING CLASSES . . . Molding machine operators Sparky Bruning (front) and Jan Canterbury (both of Dept. 425) help Rich Schmitz of the Works' training section (Dept. 075) develop a course for injection molding operators. Here they review the proper way to conduct process checking of 3B bases and housings.*

employees have earned Nebraska state certification in arc welding, having completed course work conducted on the south campus of Metropolitan Technical Community College. These were employees already on welding jobs at the Works.

- **Numbers-skills training.** A pilot course for 30 employees will begin June 10, conducted by CEC instructors. The 10-hour course is for employees whose jobs involve checking, counting,

and recording — such as storeroom jobs or those involving the use of CRTs. The course will be expanded to additional employees later.

- **Management training courses.** These courses are being developed for new section chiefs. They are designed to supplement a "nuts and bolts" training course conducted locally, and will focus on communication skills. CEC instructors will conduct classes here.

# China today: Not so far away

**H**e traveled more than 6,000 miles and visited a landmark whose origins date back to the Third Century B.C. Walking the path of the Great Wall as millions — more likely billions — did before him, Jim Grabenbauer couldn't help feeling he was back home in Iowa.

As he and thousands of Chinese tourists squeezed through narrow fortresses along the wall, he thought about being in a crowd of Iowa State football fans scrambling for the best seats when the stadium gates are opened.

That may sound like an ironic comparison, but not in the context of Grabenbauer's overall three-week stay in the People's Republic of China. His visit uncovered a China rich in contrasts and ironies, as well as pleasant surprises.

Grabenbauer was one of 23 technical-professionals constituting a delegation formed through the People-to-People Citizen

Ambassador Program. The program is an American non-profit organization that promotes international understanding.

The Chinese Mechanical Engineering Society invited the American organization to send a delegation to China to discuss material handling techniques. The delegation's leader, Iowa State University Prof. Victor Tamashunas, knew Grabenbauer when he was a university student and invited him to participate. Grabenbauer is a Dept. 507 planning engineer specializing in packaging and material handling.

The delegation left April 9, stopping in Seattle, Wash., for a briefing. Then it was on to Beijing (formerly Peking), followed by the cities of Hangzhou, Shanghai and Dalian.

## Busy schedule

Most of the trip was strictly business, with the days planned

from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. However, the Chinese hosts tried to fill breaks in the normal schedule with as much cultural exposure to their country as possible. And in off hours, "there were no restrictions. We could go wherever we wanted," Grabenbauer said.

The Americans' agenda was well organized, and they traveled everywhere by bus. You see few cars in China, he mentioned. Instead, the cities' streets are crowded with thousands of bike riders, buses, trucks and occasional horse-drawn wagons.

"We didn't see one accident — not one biker massacred by a bus. With the number of people moving around (9.4 million in Beijing), that was pretty amazing," Grabenbauer said. Another amazing thing, he added, was that nobody ever locked their bikes. "They seem to treat each other with great respect."

The presentations (all done through an interpreter) were well received, with particular interest in material handling techniques that would be most beneficial and expedient within China. The Chinese hosts also indicated an interest in developing more joint ventures with American businesses.

When they weren't giving



**ASSEMBLY LINE**  
... A factory worker mounts pistons in the block of a truck engine at a plant in Beijing. A productivity slogan hanging in the background states, "The human struggle will achieve the goal."

presentations, the Americans were given tours of several of China's factories with most advanced material handling.

"It turns out we toured five crane factories among the 12 visited," Grabenbauer said. Crane manufacture is a vital industry in China. The cranes are needed to build apartment highrises the government is constructing to house China's masses in the cities. Even at that, 80 percent of the country's population still live in rural areas.

### 48 hours

The workers "really seem to be healthy and happy" in what they do, Grabenbauer commented. They work a 48-hour week, and different factories have different days off "so everyone isn't out on the street at the same time."

There is a shortage of technical-professionals in China's industry, he said, but where the staff is sufficient, the facilities and processes are most modern. "And all of the equipment is very well maintained," even if it has been used for many years.

With so many people in the cities to be employed, Grabenbauer thought it ironic that China would be interested in automation techniques. But if China wants to increase productivity, it can't add more workers — "the cities just can't handle the large numbers of people, providing housing and so forth." China would rather automate industry and provide its people work on farms in rural areas.

Although the Americans were on a tight business schedule, there also was ample opportunity to learn something about the Chinese way of life outside of a factory environment.

For example, they were guests of honor at formal banquets where they sampled native cuisine and experienced Chinese hospitality. At these dinners, "everybody toasts everybody else," Grabenbauer said.

At one banquet, a 14-course meal was served, ranging from seaweed soup to 1,000-year-old eggs (actually a pickled delicacy not really that old). All water must be boiled in China,



*LOOK FAMILIAR? . . . Jim Grabenbauer found a reel of telephone cable protectively wrapped in bamboo instead of black polypropylene, when his tour group stopped in Shenyang. He stands outside of the Shenyang cable plant.*

so other than tea to quench thirsts visitors drank beer or "the ubiquitous orange Crush®-like soft drink."

Their hosts took them to major points of interest — the Great Wall, Red Square, the Ming Tombs — but the Americans found that they were the points of interest among the Chinese. One Chinese gentleman was rather amused to find the American tourists using Japanese-made cameras, Grabenbauer said.

### Talk by the lake

But perhaps his most insightful encounter with the Chinese people came one night during a lakeside walk in Hangzhou. Two English-speaking male factory workers struck up a conversation with Grabenbauer and another member of the American contingent.

The ensuing two-hour conversation ran the gamut from married life to economics. The two young Chinese workers said marriage, practically speaking,

was in the distant future because housing is so scarce.

Then, "they really got excited when I told them I thought China had the (production) potential to be 10 times a Japan," Grabenbauer said.

The four discussed economic difficulties in both countries, and the United States deficit was mentioned by the Chinese. They said military spending added to the deficit "and I thought — OK, now they're going to blast us for our military build-up."

Much to Grabenbauer's surprise, the Chinese men were conciliatory about the matter. "They said they didn't see Americans as aggressors in war because we already have everything we want . . . and that the United States needs its military to protect itself from Soviet aggression."

Their conversation, Grabenbauer mused, made him wonder if the ocean that separates our two countries could be more geographical than we thought philosophical.

# Drug abuse: We're all guilty

The following is one in a series of articles about health as part of "Love-Life," a health education program developed by the Immanuel Medical Center.

**A**t one time or another, almost all of us have been guilty of drug abuse.

But, you say, you've never smoked marijuana, taken heroin or used cocaine or LSD. Okay. However, how about coffee? Have you ever had so much coffee you've gotten a headache or the coffee jitters?

And what about smoking? Have you ever had a cigarette? For that matter, have you ever had too much to drink?

Caffeine, alcohol and nicotine are all forms of drugs, and their abuse has been shown to be dangerous to our bodies.

Too much aspirin, unnecessary use of antibiotics, frequent use

of over-the-counter sleeping pills or even laxatives are all part of the chemical abuse problems that are commonplace in our society.

We all know the potential dangers of using illegal drugs such as LSD, PCP, heroin and other drugs used without a doctor's prescription. Most of us are aware of the harmful effects of misusing prescription drugs or even over-the-counter drugs. Yet some of us continue to abuse our bodies with the use of these powerful drugs.

## Get serious

We tend to take too lightly the dangers of tar and nicotine from cigarettes, the life-threatening capabilities of alcohol and the serious health problems too much caffeine can cause.

The big question is why?

One of the problems with our system is that we like to classify drugs into two neat, clean categories — good and bad.

Such things as aspirin, laxatives, cough syrups and mild pain relievers fall into the good classification. Drugs like LSD, PCP, speed and cocaine fit into the bad category.

But the facts are that:

— Too much aspirin can cause hemorrhaging of the stomach tissue.

— Frequent use of nasal sprays can cause damage to the nasal passages while also creating a physical dependency on the medicine.

— Too frequent use of laxatives can damage our intestinal tract to the point that you must take laxatives in order to have a bowel movement.

— Marijuana is being used as a pain reliever for terminal cancer victims.

— Heroin and morphine are still two of the best, most effective pain relievers used by doctors today.

— Alcohol is used in some medicinal preparations to help relieve discomfort.

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## Three engineers earn patents

Three members of the Omaha Works engineering staff have been awarded U.S. patents: Mike Szymanski, a senior planning engineer in Dept. 476; Dean Davis, a planning engineer in Dept. 471; and Jack Slominski, a senior planning engineer in Dept. 275.

Szymanski shares his patent with Harvey Hancock of the Product Engineering Control Center (PECC) in Atlanta. Their patent was awarded for a method of cable stub assembly which they developed.

Davis and Slominski share their patent with Talmage Bursh Jr. of AT&T Bell Laboratories in Atlanta, and Raymond Swartz of PECC (formerly of the Omaha Works).

The four received their patent for longitudinal foil-shielded cable for electronic apparatus, which prevents radio frequency losses to the atmosphere.

This is the second time Szymanski and Davis have been awarded patents, while it is the first patent Slominski has received.



Jack Slominski



Dean Davis



Mike Szymanski

## The proper use

What we need to remember is that almost every drug has a proper use as well as an improper one. When used correctly, drugs aid us in treatment of disease, pain and emotional and physical problems.

When used incorrectly, all drugs can be dangerous — and many can be deadly. And remember that coffee, cigarettes, alcohol and common over-the-counter drugs hold the same potential for physical and mental damage as do prescribed or illegal drugs.

Most important, when it comes to medication we should listen to a doctor's advice and follow instructions on labels. If one is good, two could be dangerous.

# Service anniversaries

## 30 years

T. A. Bulling 293 5/23  
 R. Maul 475 5/2  
 D. Walker 554 5/5

## 25 years

D. A. Anderson 443 5/23  
 V. J. Brantz 429 5/17  
 A. R. Carbonell 296 5/13  
 D. D. Dennis 425 5/11  
 R. L. Feierman 425 5/24  
 D. Ferrucci 443 5/16  
 M. C. Goodell 540 5/2  
 O. J. Jurgenson 425 5/13  
 P. D. Kempkes 295 5/27  
 R. D. Knudtson 296 5/23  
 N. B. Landon 041 5/11  
 D. B. Luben 041 5/4  
 E. J. Mach 429 5/24  
 B. A. McCall 405 5/14  
 D. L. Morris 402 5/16  
 R. R. Plante 508 5/10  
 K. D. Saar 296 5/24  
 D. E. Schaaf 041 5/31  
 A. S. Schreiber 429 5/11  
 D. P. Schreiber 444 5/2  
 L. D. Shandera 041 5/6  
 M. E. Sponsel 405 5/2  
 L. A. Tietz Jr. 429 5/16  
 D. M. Wiczorek 041 5/23

## 20 years

G. L. Babel 429 5/11  
 H. D. Baratta 424 5/24  
 P. P. Belter 429 5/19

J. F. Bernady 447 5/27  
 D. C. Brechbill 425 5/24  
 D. R. Curry 448 5/20  
 D. S. Dubas 425 5/19  
 L. A. Klusaw 045 5/9  
 J. F. Limpp 295 5/3  
 R. A. Nelson 534 5/3  
 N. C. Pope 429 5/25  
 B. J. Salkeld 424 5/18  
 R. A. Schmidt 425 5/4  
 T. L. Sisson 205 5/3  
 A. Starks 293 5/3  
 J. L. Torson 536 5/18  
 S. R. Vachal 424 5/27

G. C. Wilson 424 5/18  
 R. E. Young 429 5/12

## 15 years

N. R. Beusse 205 5/19  
 J. W. Bohline 424 5/11  
 J. H. Bonaventura 402 5/25

## 10 years

L. B. Globe 442 5/23

## 5 years

D. D. Mahoney 508 5/5

# Retirements



Harlon Harvey  
45 years



Bill Ebert  
44 years



Esther Lopez  
25 years

Not pictured:

Irwin Rada  
39 years

Mary Ann  
Halverson  
27 years





## Last frame

The location was good, the product was appealing and the price was right.

Those factors contributed to brisk sales for the Night Light Co., a Junior Achievement (J.A.) company sponsored by the Omaha Works.

Young business entrepreneurs Mark Nelson (seated, front to back), Connie Tunender and Ted

Andry set up shop in the Works cafeteria during one recent noon hour. The products they were selling — quartz clocks personalized with initials, and trouble lights — were well received by employees passing by.

The Works has sponsored similar J.A. companies in past years to help youths acquire a working knowledge of the free enterprise system.

The close of this school year marks an end to Works sponsorship of such groups in the future, however, as we focus our support on other J.A. activities.

Those programs include Project Business and Applied Economics, two separate courses taught in area junior and senior high schools.

Teachers for the courses are drawn from local businesses, the Omaha Works being one. This past year, four Works employees taught in schools. Betty Orley (Dept. 531), Bob Attebery (Dept. 051) and Fred Chadwick (Dept. 534) presented the Project Business course at Beveridge Junior High, and Mike Weninghoff participated in the Applied Economics program at Gross High.



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Omaha Works  
P.O. Box 37000  
Omaha, Ne. 68137