the Westerner

OMAHA WORKS

OCTOBER 9, 1978

Getting in their licks

The annual WEOMA picnic was a treat in more ways than one. Look inside for more ways employees and their families made the most of summer's end.

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for your information

Oct. 13 has been designated "Mountain Bell Day" when special visitors from that company participate in the Omaha Works "Know Your Customer" program. The program was initiated to learn more about the operating Bell Telephone companies' product needs, and how we at the Works can serve them better. Guests from Mountain Bell who will visit with Works personnel are Lloyd Leger, vice-president, operations — staff; Paul Spieker, division staff manager — facilities; Paul Johnson, district staff manager — facilities; and Cliff Stice, district staff manager — planning. Hosts will be Charlie Higginson, Works director, and Bill Gannon, director of operations, Mountain Bell and AT&T Long Lines, accompanied by Pete Fenner, manager, Account Management, for Mountain Bell . . .

. . . The Matching Gifts Program has been received enthusiastically by Western Electric employees. Since the program began in April, the WE Fund has matched approximately $40,000 in donations. However, there is confusion concerning the eligibility of certain institutions. Gifts will be matched if the eligible educational institutions and/or their associated funds are accredited by a nationally recognized regional or professional association or agency. Apparently some requests have been received to match gifts for Bible schools, which cannot be honored because the schools are not accredited by a regional accreditation board. Also, the WE Fund will not match gifts for non-academic programs such as athletics. Contributions cannot be designated for a college's specific programs: The money must go to a school for its unrestricted use.

GUESTS ON TOUR . . . At left, Kraay (left) and Nelson visit with Paul Quandahl (center) of Dept. 1353. At right, Freche (left) and Stocks inspect a 40-type cabinet in the Product Display Center.

Visitors tour the Works

The Works was host to several visitors recently, who toured various areas of the plant.

Robert Kraay, vice-president of Western Electric Purchasing and Transportation Division, visited with personnel in the Works' resident purchasing and transportation organization. Accompanying him was Eric Nelson, director of purchasing — manufacturing.

From Northwestern Bell came two other guests. Touring the plant were Gerry Freche, executive vice-president for NWB, and Bill Stocks, vice-president — personnel.

Telephones outnumber the people

It must really be difficult to take a bath in Washington, D.C., or Southfield, Mich., without the telephone ringing. Those two cities have more telephones than people, according to AT&T's annual publication, "The World's Telephones." Washington, D.C., has 145.8 telephones per 100 residents; Southfield has 141 telephones per 100 persons. Bathing ought to be easier in Omaha, where there are 81.3 telephones per 100 residents.

The United States still has the most telephones in the world, with 82.8 million as of Jan. 1, 1977. Japan ranks second, with 48.4 million. With all those telephones, United States led the way with the most conversations during 1976 — almost 200 billion. Japan's number of conversations weren't listed. Instead, France — with just 15.5 million telephones — came in second. The French had more than 33 billion telephone conversations during 1976.

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Western Electric

service anniversaries

october

Bob Viox
30 years
10/24/48

Donald Stinson
30 years
10/25/48

James Schwetz
30 years
10/6/48

Clay Higginson
25 years
10/23/53

John Kmieciak
25 years
10/1/53

Margaret McGowan
25 years
10/3/53

Henry Holtzen
25 years
10/29/53

Lyle Hermanson
25 years
10/1/53

20 years

L. M. Ambrose
W. B. Baier
D. E. Bell
G. T. Blasing Jr.
J. A. Bonaiuto
T. J. Bosiljevac
J. W. Bowen Jr.
R. H. Bressman
C. P. Burns
L. A. Carnazzo
G. H. Chonis
M. E. Davis
D. Dokmonovich
D. O. Donaldson
I. L. Fetherkile
H. K. Feuerberg
J. P. Gollobit
A. S. Guthrie
R. W. Hanson
F. Holecek Jr.
D. W. Jensen
M. N. Jensen
O. W. Kallvik
L. G. Kojdecki
E. V. Krysl
J. H. Gosch
R. A. Kucera
A. C. Lassek
C. W. Lockhart
G. A. Merriman
L. Mohr
B. B. Morton
E. L. Owen
M. J. Panowicz
B. L. Petty
B. E. Qualset
E. E. Richards
T. E. Rickard
F. J. Schleimer
D. E. Scott
J. L. Sharp
D. D. Sudduth
R. E. Taylor
M. T. Ueding
A. R. Wegrzyn
J. D. Weidenhamer
W. H. Williams
B. H. Wilson

15 years

M. A. Donaldson
N. Grooms
K. W. Hoffmann
J. S. Moody
S. G. Reed
C. T. Van Hooser
I. D. Walters

10 years

A. W. Arnett
L. D. Bisig
H. J. Brown
T. V. Delgado Jr.
M. G. Fahey
D. A. Gordon
V. K. Hawkins
F. Hoult
A. A. Jones
D. M. Karnish
G. C. Maas
E. J. Matya
A. A. Newell
E. K. Prerost
J. L. Reynolds
L. F. Schultz
J. Trautrimas
E. H. Woodruff

retirements

Thomas Crow
33 years

Wayne Kreps
30 years

James Jardee
21 years

Felix Houska
21 years

Wanda Houska
20 years

Lloyd Jensen
20 years

suggestion box

Harold Noble of Dept. 746 is one of those persons whose idea not only looks good on paper, but it works in practice. For that reason, he recently received a suggestion award for $530.

Noble suggested that the distributor on the exchange insulating lines be modified to reduce maintenance costs. His idea increases distributor stability and thereby reduces the time required to dismantle and reassemble.

The Works saves $3,528 because of Noble's suggestion.

Gee, that cord looks familiar

The next time you twist that curly cord around your finger as you chat on the telephone, handle it as if it were your own. It just might be.

The Omaha Works makes one-third of all modular spring cords (the curly cords connecting the handset to the base) and modular straight or line cords (those connecting the base to the wall) in Bell System sets. The rest of the cords — otherwise called station cords — in the system are made at the Baltimore Works.

Up to 260,000 spring cords and 180,000 straight cords are shipped from the Works weekly. Most are sent to Material Management Centers (MMCs) which, in turn, supply service centers. But the remainder, about 25 percent, goes either to Indianapolis or to the Shreveport Works for use in shiny new telephones.

Jim Woods, department chief for Dept. 725, said Omaha has been in the station cord business since July 1976, when the Works took over cord manufacture from the closed Buffalo Works. "We make 14 colors of spring cords in six and 12-foot lengths and clear-colored straight cords in seven, 14 and 25-foot lengths," he said.

A finished cord appears to be a simple product, but actually, the manufacturing process involves many steps and many employees' hands.

The process begins in the cable shop where purchased bronze goes through the No. 1 wire draw. Next, the bronze goes through the No. 2 wire draw, which includes an annealing process, and then through the No. 3 wire draw. By now the bronze is 37-gauge wire, and is ready for use in the station cord department. If a person were to trace the manufacturing process of spring cords (the straight cord process is similar), here are the steps and some of the people he might meet along the way:

—Lilly Circo may be found operating the tinsel rolling machine, a process that flattens the bronze wire into a ribbon.

—Barbara Schutte operates a server-loosener machine, which winds four tinsel ribbons around a nylon core to make up a conductor base.

—The conductor wire is taken off small spools and rewound on large reels under the watchful eyes of workers such as Irene Leszkowicz.

—Don Schultz may be found at a conductor insulator machine, which puts plastic insulation around the conductor wire.

—Four insulated conductor wires run side by side into a jacketing machine. Here, Ed Jarrett is one who oversees the process in which one of 14 different colors of plastic make up a jacket around the four wires.

—Frank Waniska is one of the SAM operators, a machine which cuts the jacketed wires to length and wraps the cordage around four rods. The SAM "bakes" the cords to give it curl, then cools them before they are removed from the rods and the curl reversed (for better spring).

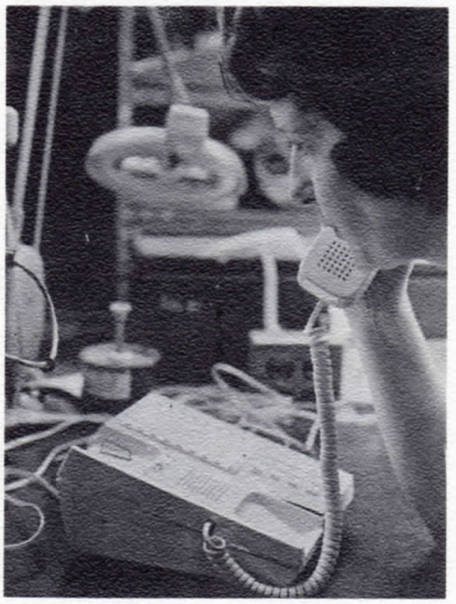
—At the PRAM, a machine that cuts and strips jacketing to expose the conductor wires, Barbara Spain is at work. PRAM inserts and affixes a plastic plug on each end of the spring cord. The plugs allow easy insertion into a telephone handset and base. PRAM also inserts four gold-plated blades in each plug for electrical connections and tests each cord electrically.

—Pat Wright is one of the employees who then tests a sampling of the cords again for electrical continuity and visual defects. Then, the inspection organization is called in to perform its job.

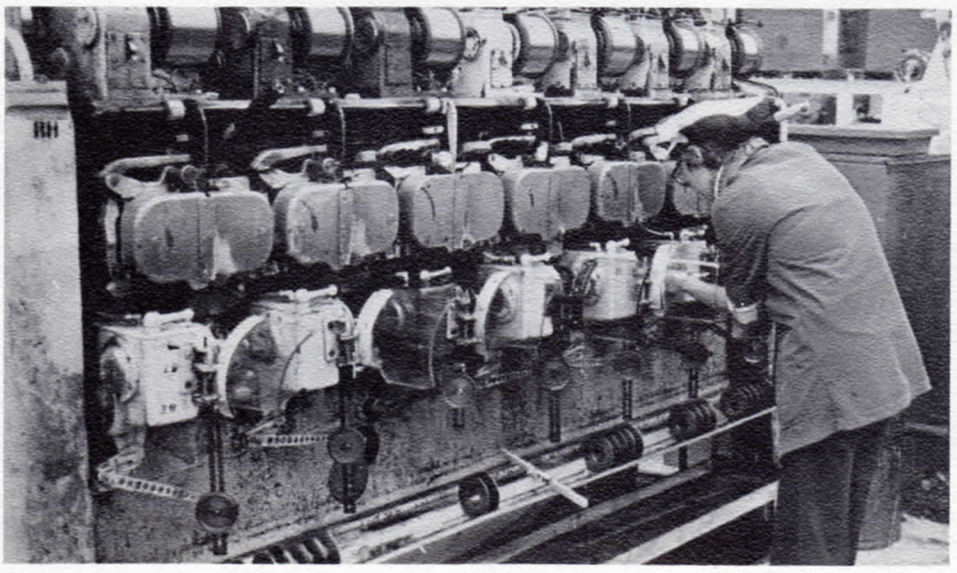
— When the inspecting organization's job is done, Dick Skrok helps bag the cords in plastic bags in preparation for shipment. Then, after Quality Assurance conducts its independent quality audit, the spring cords are on their way to their destination.

If the cords are destined for the Indianapolis Works, Joan Armstrong may be on the receiving end. As an assembler in that plant's Touch-a-matic® telephone department, she attaches modular spring cords to bases and handsets and conducts tests to assure their working order. For example, she blows into the handset to see if the transmitter and receiver are working properly.

After she completes her tests, and after the Indianapolis inspection organization and Quality Assurance perform their jobs, the telephones are ready to be shipped. Then, it is just a matter of time before the new telephones with modular cords from Omaha find their way into the homes of those people who shared in their manufacture.



EVERYBODY HELPS . . . Pat Wright (left, center photos) shares a modular spring cord with Joan Armstrong of the Indianapolis Works. Joan blows into a handset (upper right) — complete with Omaha spring cord — to assure it is working, and Lilly Circo operates the tinsel rolling machine at Omaha (below) in the early stages of station cord manufacture.



United Way pledges top quarter million

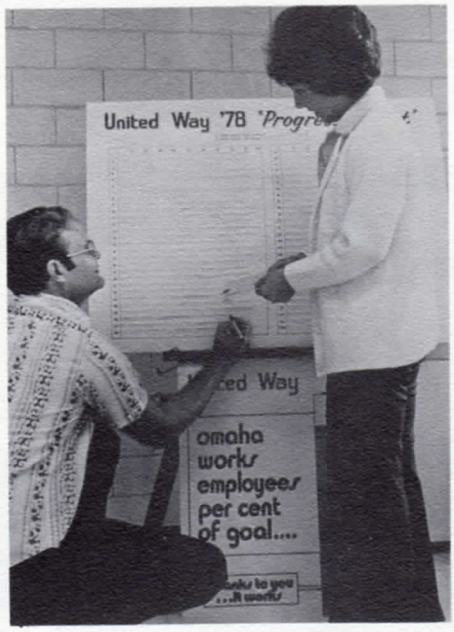
A BIG CHECK . . . Workers in this year's drive included (front row, from left) Mary Simons, Fred Drake, Tim Gilliam and Bob Alberts; (back, from left) Mike Wenninghoff, Max Strong and Jack Philby.

The weather wasn't the only thing to force thermometer readings to record highs in September. The "mercury" in the giant thermometer used to record progress toward the in-plant United Way campaign goal went over the top.

For the first time in Works history, pledges from employees to Omaha-area United Way agencies amounted to more than a quarter million dollars — $252,415.63 to be exact. That was 100.3 percent more than the goal of $251,580.

An additional $9,294.28 was raised to go to United Way agencies in the Lincoln, Fremont and Wahoo areas. In all, employees pledged $261,709.91, an 8 percent increase over last year's figure.

Participation in the campaign stands at 87 percent this year, with hourly rated employees pledging $149,585.88 and salaried employees pledging $112,124.03. Contributing to the success of this year's drive were two top solicitors: Sharon Barden of Dept. 439 for the hourly employees, and Fred Drake of Dept. 1352 for salaried employees.



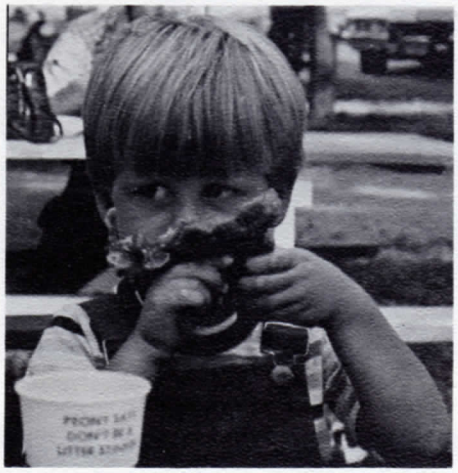
OFFICE WORK . . . Bill Huetson (Dept. 253) and Sharon Anderson (Dept. 439) pictured at left count up pledges while Mel Domina (Dept. 437) and Connie DeBord (Dept. 725) keep track of the campaign's progress.

Cornhusker Chapter selects its new Pioneer insignia

One can't have a new Pioneer chapter without an accompanying new insignia. When the Telephone Pioneers A.B. Goetze Council became Cornhusker Chapter No. 92 in July, a contest for a new insignia was in order.

Paul Lange of Dept. 514 came up with the winning design: a big cowboy hat (red, maybe?) perched atop an ear of corn. For his design Lange received a $25 U.S. Savings Bond.

Lange



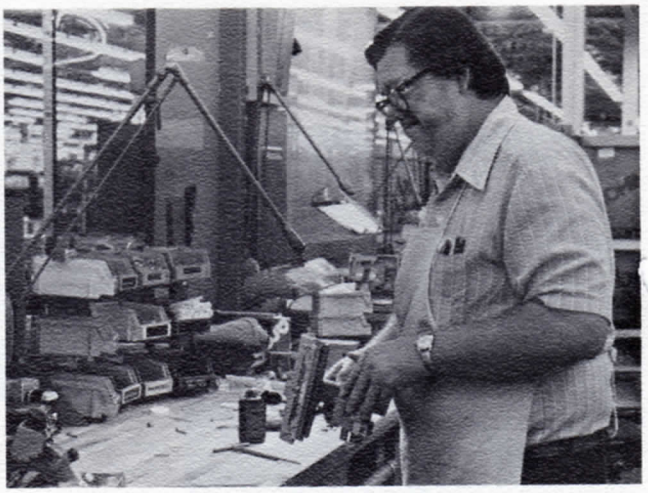
Summer's last hurrah

One more chance . . . for roofless dining, not caring if the crumbs spill to the floor . . . for sharing a scream or two on amusement park rides . . . for drippy ice cream cones and sticky-fingered kids.

The chance was there for the taking at the annual WEOMA Club picnic at Peony Park Sept. 24. Games, rides, chicken dinners and even a disco dance contest occupied the picnickers.

It was one more chance to pretend it's still summer, before enveloping ourselves in wintry cocoons of flannels and woolens.

New splicing tool geared for field use



ALL TOGETHER . . . Elwin "Irish" Donahoo of Dept. 441 assembles an 835-A1 tool.

Have you taken a look at what's going on in Dept. 441 lately? Folks there are manufacturing a new tool so popular that it wastes no time on the stock shelves at Material Management Centers (MMCs). And the way the tool is made is well worth the stares of fascinated passers-by.

The new product is the 835-AI tool, which is used to splice cables with 710 connectors. Maurie Johnson of Dept. 476 said production began in July, and expects that 3,000 of the tools will have been manufactured by the end of the year.

Reaction has been such that "we can't keep up with the demand, so we're allocating directly to Bell customers," Johnson said, instead of stocking MMCs. Next year, 10,000 of the tools are expected to be manufactured at the Omaha Works.

Physical size alone shows there is a vast difference between the 835-AI tool and the D cutter-presser. The 835-AI tool doesn't require any source of compressed air or a hydraulic pump as does the D cutter-presser. The tool is "strictly hand operated," Johnson said.

Another advantage to the customer is that less time is required to set up the tool to start splicing in the field, compared to the D cutter-presser.

Because setup time is an important factor for field splicing, naturally the 835-A1 tool is preferred. However, on continuous operations like the Omaha Works' CONECS shop, setup isn't a problem because once the tool is in place, it normally isn't changed. Also, the D cutter-presser requires less physical exertion because it is activated by compressed air.

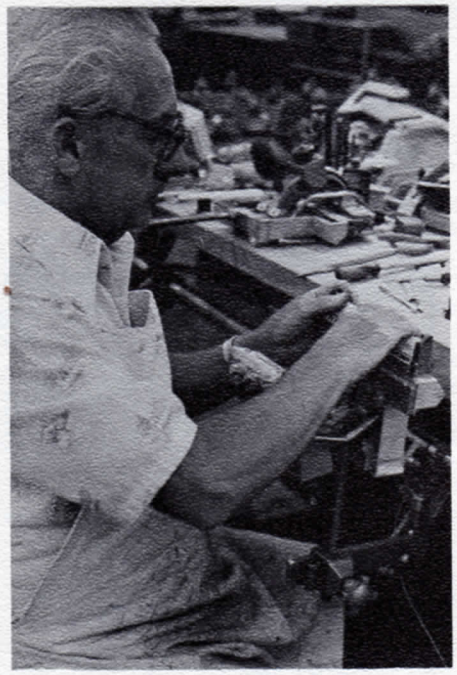
The 835-AI tool has been received so favorably because "it is so much more convenient to use in the field than the D cutter-presser," he said. The tool "will supplant most of the demand for the D cutter-presser," which still will be used, but on a limited basis. Within the Works itself, the D cutter-presser will be used in CONECS to put 710 connectors on cable and cable stubs, for example. The 835-AI tool will be used specifically in the field.

If the 835-AI tool itself is an example of technological progress, the method in which it is manufactured is nothing short of revolutionary. Machining of some of the castings that go into the tool is done by a Computer Numerically Controlled Machining Center (CNC). Two CNCs have been installed — one of which has been in use since July — and a third is to be added.

All machining is computer and numerically controlled. An engineer designs a program (a kind of blueprint of the component to be machined) which is put on tape. The tape is fed into the CNC, which automatically produces a completed part for the 835-AI tool. A revolving tool holder on one of the CNCs can hold up to 30 different tools (such as a drill) for use in making 835-AI tool components.

The CNC requires only one setup to make a part, compared to conventional machining methods in which four or five setups may be necessary. With fewer setups involved, there is less chance for errors, Johnson said.

The CNC allows components to be machined faster and at less cost to the Works, he concluded. Eventually, most of the machined parts required on the 835-AI tool are to be made on the CNC.



IN CONTROL . . . Bob Viox (above) of Dept. 441 adjusts an 835-A1 tool while Chris Madsen (right) of Dept. 441 operates a Computer Numerically Controlled Machining Center.