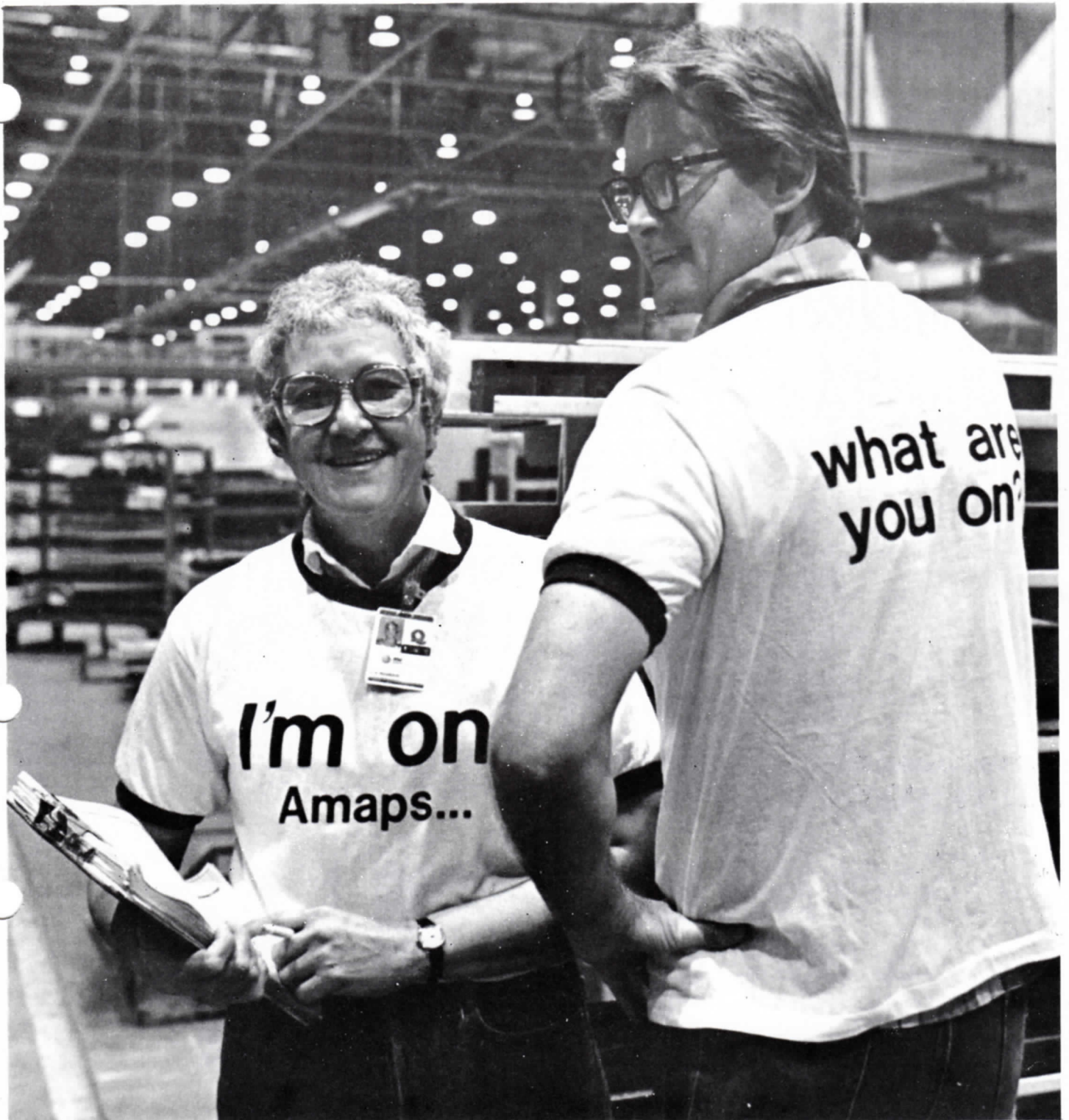


# WESTERNER

Omaha Works  
January 1986





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January 1986

Vol. 30, No. 1

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in the money**

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## On the cover

If you have to ask what it means, you haven't been paying attention all of these past months. AMAPS is the software system being used to fully introduce MRP II (Manufacturing Resource Planning), which will give the Omaha Works a more formalized accounting of inventory. Employees like output tracer Lucy Klusaw and machine operator Tom Luther in Dept. 225 wore T-shirts commemorating their department's cutover to the new software system. Another photo and story appear on Page 7.

## WESTERNER

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# Ideas pay off in a big way

It's not exactly the same as winning \$4 million in a lottery, but it may be the next best thing. And even after the big check is awarded, the benefits continue.

We're talking about the Omaha Works employee suggestion program, in which employees are encouraged to submit ideas to improve productivity. If the company decides to use an employee's suggestion, he or she is awarded an amount that reflects 15 percent of the savings to be realized in a year's time by putting a suggestion into effect.

The minimum award per suggestion is \$25 and the maximum is \$10,000. In the past few months, numerous suggestion awards have been presented, including seven awards of more than \$1,000 to eight employees. The seven awards represent a total savings of more than \$160,000 to the Works.

The granddaddy of them all

was a \$10,000 award presented to **Marty Homes**, a layout operator in Dept. 201.

Homes works in the satellite die lab in Building 50. The dies used for drawing tinned copper wire were causing excessive amounts of tin to be scraped off in the process.

"We tried different things but there was always a loss of tin," he said. So Homes redesigned the dies in a way to permit a more gradual drawing of wire. As a result, tin shavings are minimal now, dies last longer and waste no longer clogs equipment. Homes also expects there will be fewer wire breaks in the drawing process.

Considering the amount of wire drawing done at the Works, Homes knew his award would be sizeable, but not \$10,000. It means he and his wife, Beverly, can take an extra trip — maybe to the Scandinavian countries.

Homes, who has submitted



Wallace  
Williams



Doug Reed



Robert Dekker



Emma  
Epperson



Myrtle Mapes



Gene Chleboun



Gerald Danahy



suggestions in the past (his largest award previously was \$250), is a strong supporter of the program.

A good idea can make a job easier, he said, but there is another reason why suggestions are important. "With all of the competitors we have, everybody should be thinking about where the company could save money in making a product," he said.

It's critical that we make our products at low cost to be competitive — "I'd kind of like to keep my job a while longer," he said.

All of the other suggestion award winners interviewed agree with Homes. "Anytime the company can cut costs, it helps me," said **Robert Dekker**, a technician in Dept. 541. "It's a no-lose proposition — whether they accept the suggestion or not."

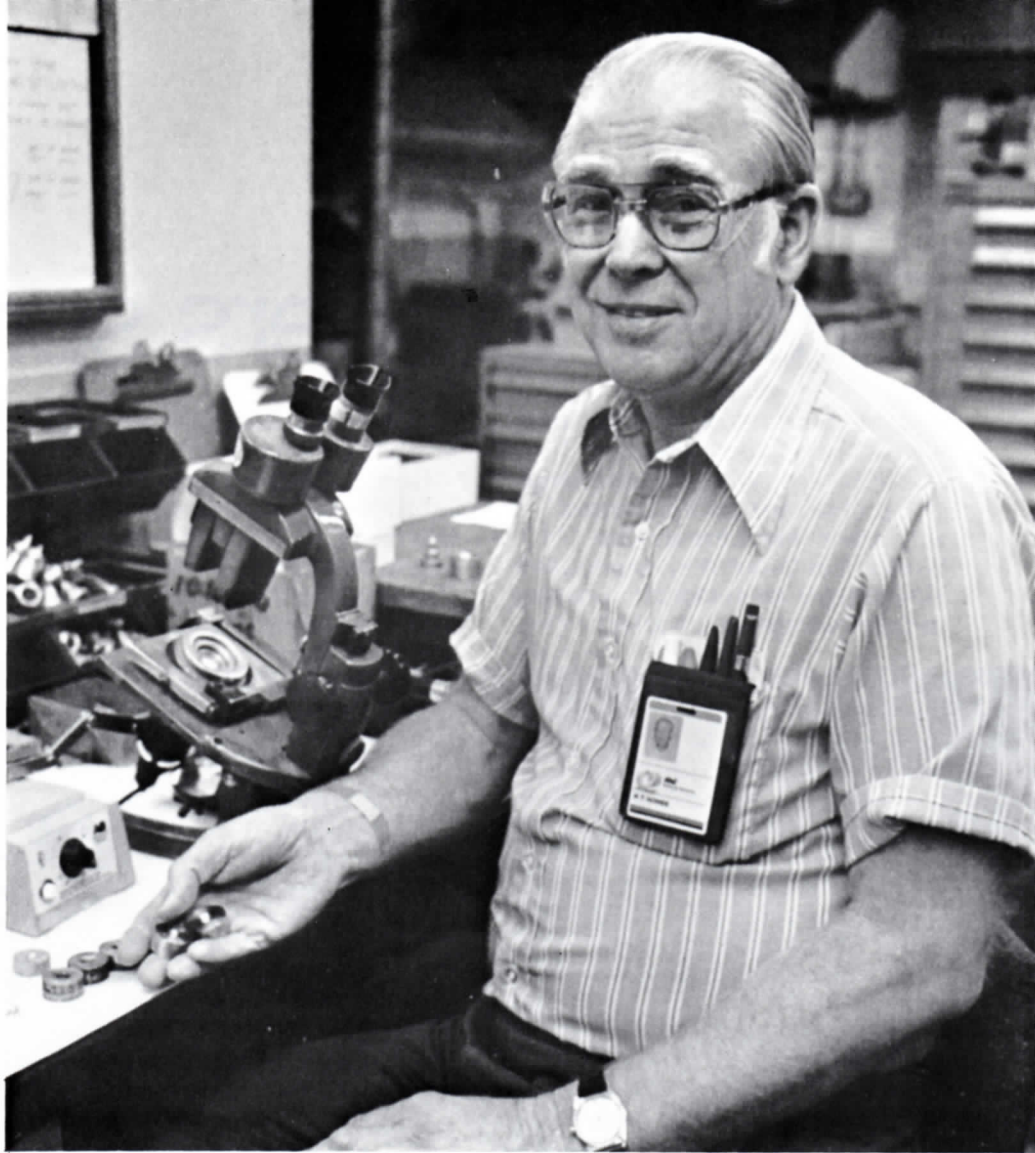
Dekker suggested that a different type of strobe be used in checking the coding on insulating lines. His idea earned him \$4,145.

**Gerald Danahy**, a salvage analyst in Dept. 540, earned \$3,685. He suggested that a permanent dock that had been under partial use be substituted for a portable dock in loading scrap wire to be taken to the Works' granulator. Savings resulted from better time usage and by eliminating the need for railcars.

During his 28 years on the Works' roll, Danahy has submitted 62 suggestions and has collected on 26 — although none as large as his latest. "Just about anything anybody does can be improved on," he said.

**Wallace Williams** and **Doug Reed** shared a \$2,950 award for improving the tops of kiln cars used in the carbon block room. Both in plant maintenance (Dept. 544), it was their job to repair tops that deteriorated in the manufacturing process. It was a very difficult and time-consuming job, they said, so they came up with a solution.

**Gene Chleboun**, now a layout operator in Dept. 225, tired of removing corroded anodes used in the electroplating process in the plating room. "It was time



*NO MORE CLOSE SHAVES . . . Marty Homes had an idea for a die that saves the company money and has earned him the top suggestion award of \$10,000.*

consuming cleaning out the tanks and getting out the residue," he said.

His idea to switch to a different type of anode ended the corrosion and earned Chleboun \$1,230.

**Emma Epperson** figured out a way to make warning lights more visible on injection molding machines. Now operators like her can tell at a glance when a machine is in trouble.

Submitting a suggestion is better "than sitting in the break area and complaining," she said. "Put it down on paper and send it in. It's a lot better than complaining constantly to someone who can't do anything about it."

Epperson was awarded \$1,040 for her idea.

Assembler **Myrtle Mapes** of Dept. 448 thought a single

length of cable with a male and female plug on opposite ends would eliminate wasted cable in her connecting block job. She was right. Mapes was awarded \$1,025.

The key to coming up with suggestions, she said, is to keep your eyes open on the job: "If I see someone else doing a job and it looks like it can be done better, I try to come up with an idea."

Other Works employees who have come up with winning ideas in recent months include the following: **Clois Crawford**, Dept. 541, \$715; **Ronald Schaaf**, Dept. 429, \$600; **Joan Durbin**, Dept. 429, \$525; **Shirley Peterson**, Dept. 443, \$305; **Joseph O'Grady**, Dept. 296, \$145; **Ivan Cheers**, Dept. 429, \$140; **Floyd Schadendorf**, Dept. 544, \$100.



# Circle members spread the word

**T**wo assemblers, a tester and a wirer never dreamed they would be speaking before a large group of people in connection with their jobs here at the Works. Yet there they were, some 1,300 miles from home, speaking in front of about 80 AT&T

managers ranking at fifth level or above.

Gordon Viner, Sharon Brown, Ed Betzer and Linda Moore traveled to AT&T's Corporate Education Center (CEC) in Hopewell, N.J., before the Christmas holidays to be guest

speakers at the company's Management Forum program. They were invited to present a "success story" in behalf of the Works' Quality Circle No. 12. The presentation focused on how excessive scrap was eliminated in the manufacture of



ord

protected terminal blocks, ultimately saving the Works more than \$100,000 a year.

Largely because their presentation was so well received by the managers, the Omaha Works was asked to send another employee team to give its success



story. So Josephine Willis, Al Wilson, Wally Leander and Sparky Bruning headed for CEC to give a presentation in behalf of Quality Circle No. 7. Their presentation focused on how the circle worked to eliminate a cardboard insert in packing DFW coils, an improvement amounting to more than \$91,000.

The 12-week Management Forum program series featured success stories as they have occurred throughout AT&T. Managers from all AT&T entities — in AT&T Technologies and AT&T Communications — attended sessions during the 12-week period.

In advance of the Forum, the Omaha Works and other AT&T locations were asked to submit items of interest with an underlying theme of achievement. Vern Larson, who is facilitator for the Works' 15 quality circles, said eight success stories all relating to our circles were submitted.

Forum planners received 392 success stories on varying topics from throughout the company. Just 36 were selected for presentation, two of the Works' stories being among them.

Both employee teams from the Works put in many hours in the preparation of their presentations. They researched

statistics, wrote their remarks and took slides to help illustrate their achievements.

Before the Circle 7 team left for CEC, employees from both teams expressed to the West-erner their views on the opportunity to participate in Management Forum.

"I thoroughly enjoyed it. It was a unique experience I won't forget," said Linda Moore.

Moore said she, like the others, were a little nervous about speaking in front of a group of managers, "but they were very easy to talk to."

Ed Betzer agreed, explaining that he found those in the upper levels of management to be receptive to the group and eager to learn more about how quality circles work in Omaha.

Team members had a chance to meet informally with the managers after their presentation and reported that the managers were "very complimentary" and "very supportive" of their quality of worklife (QWL) efforts.

"I really got the feeling that the support for QWL is there — that people really do want QWL to work," Moore said.

Al Wilson, whose team had not yet gone to CEC at the time of this interview, was looking forward to a chance to exchange

(Continued on Page 6)

#### PUTTING IT INTO WORDS . . .

*Quality circle members worked together to prepare for a Management Forum presentation on a Circle 7 success story. From left are Wally Leander, Josephine Willis, Ed Betzer, Sparky Bruning and Gordon Viner.*



# QWL teams featured at CEC

(Continued from Page 5) ideas among people of differing job backgrounds. Referring to the success the first team experienced, he said the presentation "was an example of how people can work together no matter what level they are."

"It's an opportunity for the Omaha Works to show what problems we have had and to share with other locations how we have solved them," commented Sparky Bruning.

Gordin Viner agreed, adding that QWL circles are good examples that "people actually have a voice in what's done. And by making presentations like these, that point is made to others who may not be aware of it."

Both Viner and Betzer mentioned that although participation in the Forum was an honor for those on the Works teams, participating in the sessions was really the next logical step in their QWL work. Said Viner, "You have to take it to more people with administrative power to expand the program."

"Every time we do something like this, it spreads the word," commented Sharon Brown. "The only way QWL is going to succeed is to get everyone involved in it."

Moore thinks the teams'

presentations helped those in managerial positions to better understand the function of QWL and to realize that "people who work the same job day after day do have ideas — and they're good ideas."

But in addition to gaining support for QWL efforts, there may be another thing to be gained in participating at the Forum.

Brown pointed out that "they can now perceive us (at Omaha) as educated, knowledgeable and willing to change." The circles have demonstrated responsibility and dedication in their work that reflects upon the whole Works.

When it comes to assigning product responsibilities to manufacturing locations, she said the Works has shown "that we can handle the job."

## Survey on quality circles

We're interested in knowing your views on Quality of Worklife (QWL) and quality circles at the Omaha Works. Please take a few minutes to fill out the following survey. Results will be published in a later issue.

9. Do you know what a quality circle is? Please give a brief definition.

9. Do you think quality circles are effective? Why or why not?

9. Is your work area represented by a quality circle? If not, would you like to have one? Why or why not?

9. Would you volunteer to serve on a quality circle? If not, please explain why.

Your department number \_\_\_\_\_ (please, no names)

Send your response through company mail to **Linda Ryan, Westerner editor, Public Relations Dept. 031.**

# Service anniversaries

## 30 years

Childs, J.R. 1/10

## 25 years

Bloodsworth, H. R. 1/27  
Deegan, W. J. 1/4

## 20 years

Aldrich, G. W. 1/25  
Ashbrook, R. C. 1/24  
Benkis, A. Jr. 1/3  
Brittell, D. D. 1/17  
Callaghan, G. W. 1/24

Callihan, R. A. Jr. 1/31  
Donahoo, F. W. 1/22  
Drews, B. J. 1/17  
Flemings, A. M. 1/31  
Foutch, T. R. 1/4  
Gagner, J. G. 1/25  
Green, C. W. 1/23  
Gurney, D. J. 1/25  
Levi, J. R. 1/10  
Melia, R. F. 1/31  
Nihsen, E. H. 1/4  
Ostrand, H. R. 1/8  
Pacholski, G. M. 1/24  
Pierce, D. G. 1/26  
Prue, S. B. 1/23

Scott, W. E. 1/21  
Van Ampting, M. E. 1/17  
Vogel, P. R. 1/31  
Volkart, V. A. 1/10

## 15 Years

Chase, B. T. 1/7  
Davis, W. L. 1/20  
Hart, A. M. 1/27  
Jack, L. 1/10  
Kohls, D. C. 1/10  
Marx, H. J. 1/22  
Peterson, J. W. 1/29  
Walters, M. C. 1/12

## 10 years

Harris, J. M. 1/9  
Lopez, S. R. 1/2

## 5 years

Nielsen, D. M. 1/28  
Viliunas, M. 1/5



"T" FOR THREE . . . Dept. 225 employees select their T-shirts. From left are layout operator Gordon Van Fosson, layout operator Dwight Lockhart and machine setter Bob Renter.

## Dept. 225 'cutover' is a first

Employees in Dept. 225 are sporting new T-shirts these days that proclaim, "I'm on AMAPS . . . what are you on?"

The slogan refers to "cutting over" the cosmic framework and sheet metal shop to the AMAPS material control system (MCS) module pertaining to planning and releasing manufactured orders.

Dept. 225 is the first operating department to be plugged into the new software system. Wayne Andersen, who is on the AMAPS planning team for this cutover, said the system should reduce work-in-process inventories and improve customer service.

"We will know exactly what stage our products are in so we can make realistic commit-

ments to the customer," Andersen said.

Ultimately, it should improve the quality of worklife for all employees, he said. "The crux of the system is that everyone is communicating with each other at all levels and they are reflecting those commitments within a formalized system."





## Last frame

Senior industrial engineer Bob Attebery became a teacher of sorts when he served as a tour guide for visiting students from Omaha's Beveridge Junior High. He stopped to explain the workings of a 300-type central

office connector when his tour group visited Building 30.

Tours of the office and shops were scheduled over a four-day-period for almost 100 Beveridge students who participate in Project Business classes at the school.

Project Business is a Junior Achievement program in which local companies provide staff members to conduct classes in area schools. The classes relate

to how the free enterprise system works in the business environment.

This year four Omaha Works employees are teaching the classes at Beveridge — Betty Orley, Fred Chadwick, Tim Raasch and Attebery.

In the five years the Works has been participating in Project Business, tours for students have been conducted at the end of each school semester.



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