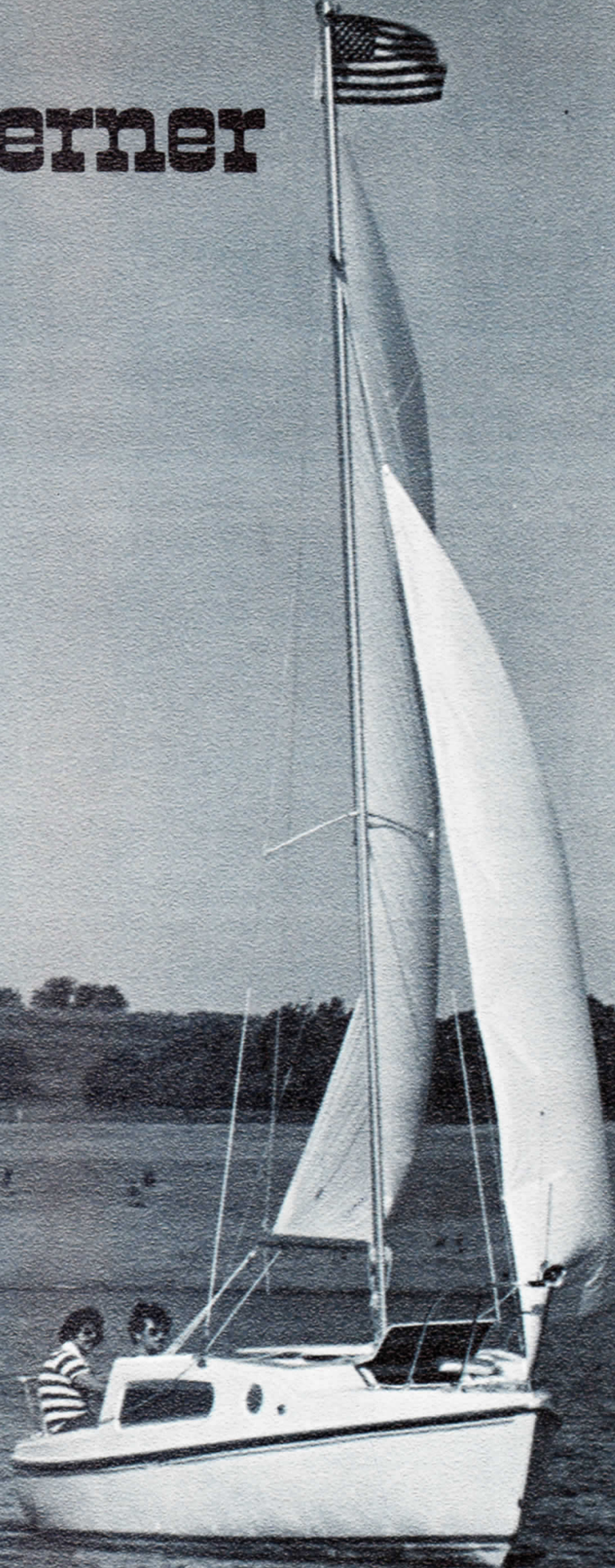


the Westerner

OMAHA WORKS
July 17, 1978



- Two ways to get summer days off the ground — Pages 4-6

- Getting to know the customer — Page 2
- A salute to a good neighbor — Page 7

Know Your Customer

NWB is first visitor in program

Even if the customer isn't always right, he certainly knows what he wants. Trouble is, sometimes what the customer wants isn't understood by the one who sells him a product — and that's not good business.

The Omaha Works took a step toward better business last month when it initiated the "Know Your Customer" program. Its purpose is to meet with representatives of the operating Bell Telephone companies in an effort to improve our understanding of their needs and to learn how we at the Works can serve them better. Tours of the plant are included, during which visiting representatives are shown a broad spectrum of all Works products, with emphasis on outside plant products. Each Works employee receives a flier that provides background information about the particular Bell Telephone company whose representatives are visiting the plant.

Two representatives from Northwestern Bell were the first from the Bell companies to participate in the program June 9. Works director Charlie Higginson and Vic Kassel, Account Management director of operations for NWB, were hosts to Chuck Pierce, NWB's assistant vice-president—facilities, and Bob Sinks, assistant vice-president—construction planning.

In the morning, Pierce and Sinks spoke in the auditorium with supervisory and technical-professional personnel. There was time for dialogue, during which Works personnel asked specific questions relating to the customer's

IDEA EXCHANGE . . .
NWB guests (from left) Chuck Pierce and Bob Sinks visit in the Product Display Center with Gerry Graves, Account Management sales, service and staff manager for NWB; Works director Charlie Higginson; and Tom Bowman.



needs and expectations. Prior to the session, the visitors stopped in the Product Display Center, and afterward were taken on shop tours.

Pierce remarked that the program didn't make him feel like just another telephone company supervisor: "I really am being treated like a customer — and it feels good."

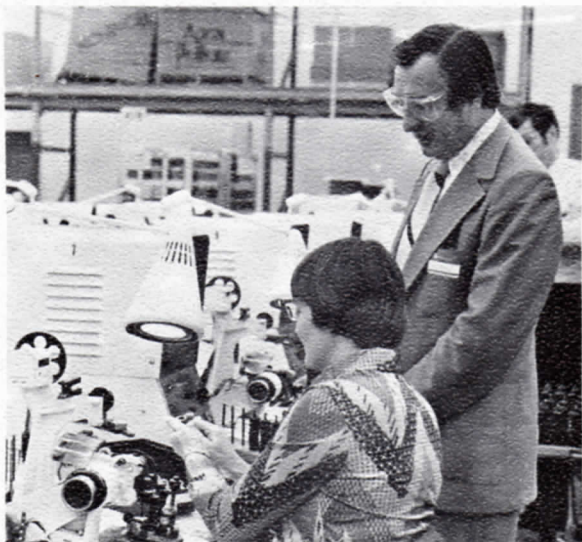
Tom Bowman, who helps introduce the Works' new products to customers, elaborated on Pierce's comment. "We used to growl about things the customer asked because it upset us," he said. "Now we realize they are the customer, and we had better pay attention to their needs" if we are to succeed in an increasingly competitive market.

Both Pierce and Sinks indicated they

would like to return to the Works, basically to spend more time touring the shops and seeing new products.

According to Bowman, the program also was a hit with Kassel and other Account Management personnel who participated. "They found the whole thing worthwhile," Bowman said, "and especially liked the interaction between the visitors and the tech pros and supervisory personnel. It left the right impression on the customer."

The June 9 program was only a beginning. Similar visits by other operating Bell Telephone company representatives are being scheduled, with the next planned for August.



ON TOUR . . . Vic Kassel watches as Joan Nelson works in the load coil winding area of Dept. 443.

**the
Westerner**
VOL. 22 NUMBER 8

Warren G. Corgan
General Manager

Linda Ryan
Editor

Published for employees of the Omaha Works.
For information write: Editor, *The Westerner*,
P.O. Box 14000, West Omaha Station, Omaha,
Nebraska, 68114; or telephone 334-4132.

Member
Nebraska Association of Business Communicators
International Association of Business Communicators
Printed in the U.S.A.

 **Western Electric**



Donald Hanrahan
30 years 8/11/48

service anniversaries

august



Milt Baker
30 years 8/30/48

retirements



Clarence Kabat
37 years



June Schuster
25 years



Gertrude Graham
25 years



Donald Cockrill,
22 years



Joseph Burke
21 years



Richard Melies
20 years



Joseph Chase
20 years

(Not pictured)
Edward Faust
22 years

J. D. Andrews
A. L. Balkovic
B. R. Bessey Jr.
G. J. Blohm
G. A. Colton
H. J. Cook
J. A. Deckert
D. A. Desler
L. D. Duros
J. Egenberger
A. C. Fiala
L. E. Fletcher
C. H. Gerhard
M. L. Hansz
R. E. Head
D. J. Hegarty

W. D. Bamsey
E. J. Belik Jr.
L. V. Christensen
L. E. DeLong
H. H. Dickman Jr.
J. S. Elliott
L. Felthouser

J. H. Allen
B. L. Andersen
S. M. Baumgard
F. L. Cate
J. M. Chaloupka
B. K. Chrastil
T. I. Crabtree Jr.
A. F. Faltin

20 years

L. D. Jensen
R. L. Johnson
M. R. Kearns
J. E. Kocsis
D. A. Krom
R. W. Latimer
W. S. Leander
M. L. Lewis
J. A. Mallory
I. J. Mascher
J. L. Meek
T. M. Mentzer
D. L. Neubaum
G. L. O'Connor
T. D. O'Neill
K. E. Ostrand

15 years

J. V. Larocca
R. D. Madison
G. E. Reimers
L. B. Robinson
L. C. Simonson
H. G. Stroh

10 years

M. S. Holm-Hansen
H. M. James
R. L. Krambeck
M. S. Miller
B. D. Opfer
J. J. Pabian
E. L. Palensky
C. M. Perry

D. R. Reed
L. W. Riter
D. S. Sacca
M. E. Saner
J. L. Sedlacek
R. L. Scott
D. A. Study
R. T. Swift
R. E. Tjarks
V. M. Tridle
J. D. Vanstratten
W. J. Wallace
T. L. White
J. B. Williams Jr.
E. R. Wolski

E. B. Suverkrubbe
O. W. Townsend
D. E. Trimble
D. S. Udron
J. A. Wacker
L. B. Wigg

B. H. Roberts
D. L. Sage
J. C. Sharpnack Jr.
G. F. Siebe
D. W. Stang
G. J. Stewart
P. F. Walters
S. H. Wilson

suggestion box

Suggestions by two employees earned them awards recently that totaled more than \$1,000.

James Paulhaber earned a \$625 suggestion award for his idea to use steal inserts in the welding jaws for miniature wire spring relay single wire block hand welders. Paulhaber is

in Dept. 741.

Eugene Dixon of Dept. 746 received a \$460 suggestion award. Dixon suggested adjustments be made to the Model B strand annealer jack shaft that would eliminate an alignment problem between the jack shaft and annealer stub shaft.



AHOY THERE . . . Cruz (left) and Brown watch the sails on board "Tina" (also on cover) as they sail on Papio Lake No. 11. Cover photo and photos on these pages by Rog Howard.

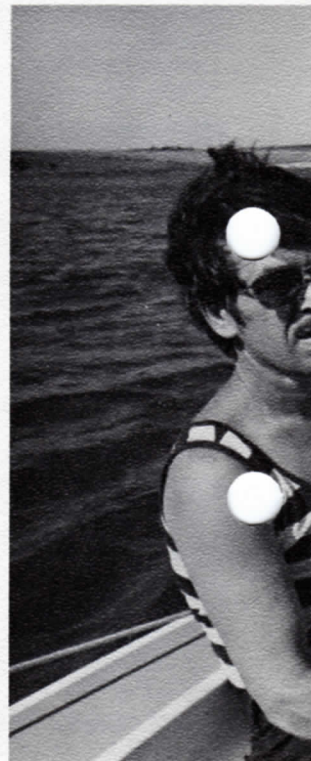
And may never be

Noah didn't have half the fun on his ark that Art Cruz of Dept. 741 is having on his. But then, Cruz needn't hassle with cantankerous elephants or persnickety cats on his "ark," a 21-foot cabin sailboat for four he built himself. All Cruz has to worry about is the next gust of wind that will propel him on his voyage in a lake.

One thing he has in common with Noah, however, is adventure. Cruz never had been on a sailboat before he constructed and launched "Tina" about a year ago. Add to that a father-in-law who likes to "put some excitement" into sailing by severely "heeling" (tilting) the boat to one side, and a person truly comes to know the thrill of sailing.

"The first time we took the boat out and he heeled it, it just about scared me to death," Cruz said of his father-in-law, Doug Brown, of Dept. 725. Brown provided the driveway in which the boat was built from kit, as well as assistance: "He bought the beer and I built the boat," Cruz said.

It took Cruz about three months to build the boat, working daily after work.



SKIPPER AND CREW . . . Brown (left) tends to the ropes for the smaller sail called a jib. Skipper Cruz tends to the tiller and main sheet (the ropes for the main sail).

the wind at your back

It might have gone faster, but Cruz and Brown both had to check definitions of sailing terms before following instructions. At one point, six men helped install the 460-pound, cast-iron keel beneath the boat. The keel helps keep the boat upright. In all, the boat weighs 4,000 pounds.

ALTHOUGH his boat could have a motor, Cruz won't stand for it — not even a paddle. If the wind stops and he can't get to shore, "I just get a tan and wait for the next puff," he said. Should a storm come up suddenly, "you just pull down all the sails and get in the cabin and pray."

Theoretically, his sailboat is "self-righting" and can't be tipped over completely on its side, Cruz said, so tipping isn't of great concern to him. However, he suspects the ropes controlling the boat's two sails are too short. On one gusty day he was sailing, the ropes pulled away from him and he grounded the boat.

"Nothing was hurt," he said, "just my ego." And there's nothing more embarrassing for a sailor than a fisherman of-

fering him assistance. Actually, the only real accident Cruz has had on his boat occurred when he was building it. "I fell off the boat. It was raining and the deck was slippery," he said.

PASSENGERS on Cruz's boat — or any sailboat — take an active part in sailing. They constantly must move from one side of the boat to the other, because "the attainable speed and stability depends on properly centering the weight on the boat," said Brown.

They also must watch out for the swinging boom of a sail, or they may find themselves in the water, said sailor Bill Zorko of Dept. 741. He ought to know: He and his daughter took an unexpected dip when the boom on their surfboard-like sailboat knocked them over.

"Sometimes dunking can be fun on a hot day," said Clay Higginson of Dept. 731. Higginson himself has built four single-person, rowboat-type sailboats. Unlike Cruz's boat, if a boat Higginson made were to tip over, it would require human effort to "right it." Surfboard-type boats, with a cockpit for feet only, are easier to upright.



One of the most important skills a sailor must master is "tacking." A person doesn't sail straight to a destination, but approaches it in a zigzag pattern. One of the advantages of tacking is a sailor avoids sailing with the wind directly behind him (which can be dangerous because of sudden wind shifts).

Zorko learned about tacking the hard way in 1946 while in the service. He was aboard a Japanese junk near Korea and the crew "ran with the wind" until land no longer was in sight. That's when they discovered tacking, he said.

Ideally, winds five to 10 miles per hour are preferred for sailing. A rule of thumb is not to sail if winds exceed the length of one's boat, all sailors agreed.

THE MOST difficult part of sailing is "paying for the sailboat," kidded Higginson. Cruz, however, said docking is difficult, especially with the wind at one's back — "no brakes."

Often a fisherman is sitting on the dock and doesn't move. "People are used to motorboats," which have more control, Cruz said. A sailboat coming to dock may be moving fast and there is no motor — just a sailor "swinging his arms and yelling 'Get out of the way!'"

Given the risks of sailing, it's a wonder anybody sails, but a sailing enthusiast will insist nothing beats the cool breezes and quiet on a sailboat. "Anyone can handle a motorboat, but not everyone can handle a sailboat," Cruz said. "And not everyone can go to the Bahamas by sailboat for a vacation."

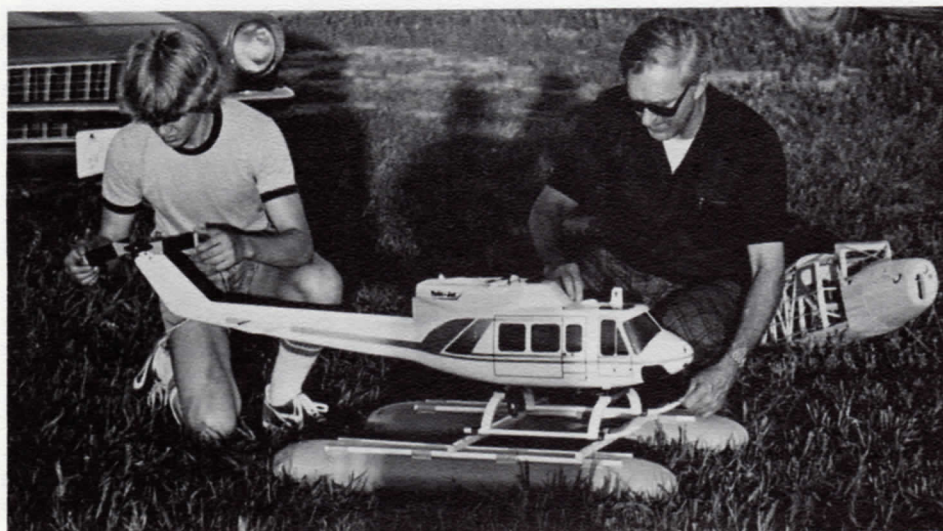
The adventure of sailing for Cruz, it seems, is only beginning. By next year, he hopes to have tacking and all the maneuvers down pat. Then, he'll launch from Palm Beach and head for the Bahamas.



IS IT HEAVY? . . .
Don Kaar shows off
one of his planes.



FISHING? . . . No, Page Nolan (top)
operates the controls. Below, Al
Kummer and son Kirk inspect their
helicopter.



The plane's in the air; the pilot's left behind

Look, ma! No more white-knuckled flying. No more flip-flopping stomachs as the pilot takes the plane through upside-down and spiraling maneuvers. In fact, no more passengers.

A passenger couldn't fit into the kind of planes this story is about — radio control planes. But despite their miniaturized size, radio control planes "can do anything a real plane can do — except break the sonic boom," said Page Nolan of Dept. 748. Nolan is a member of the WEOMA R.C. Fliers, a group of hobbyists who build radio control planes from kit or scratch then fly their creations in the countryside.

Not surprisingly, several of the club's members have had experience piloting planes of the full-sized variety. They are able to satisfy their craving to fly but at comparatively less cost by becoming the pilots of radio control planes, said Nolan, who took flying lessons 30 years ago.

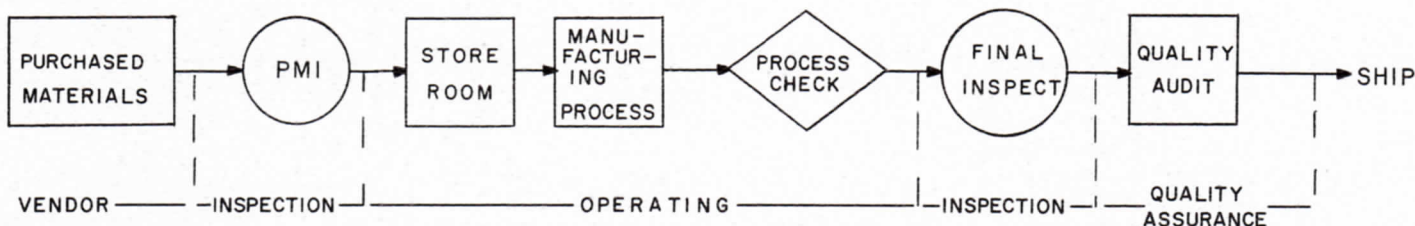
"Practically speaking a person can spend from \$300 to \$600" building a radio control plane, Nolan said. Models built to scale raise the price even higher. That's considerably less than \$20,000 to buy a single-engine plane.

SINCE NOLAN began flying radio control planes three years ago, he has "totaled" two planes. Still, in three years he has spent less than \$6 on damages to engines, and none on radio repairs. Crack-ups usually aren't costly, because the radio transmitting-receiving apparatus — which accounts for most of the cost of the hobby — generally isn't damaged, he explained. What costs is the time one must spend making repairs rather than flying.

Apparently, the hobbyists don't mind the time spent building and repairing planes. "I enjoy building a plane as much as flying it," said Herb Hickman of Dept. 120. In the past year, he has found that flying his plane, a Falcon, is a good hobby to share with his 14-year-old son.

Al Kummer of Dept. 472 also sees radio control flying as a family activity, but so far, Kummer has yet to handle takeoffs and landings on his own. An ex-

(Continued on Page 8)



ALL ABOUT QUALITY . . . The Works buys materials from an outside source or vendor; the inspection organization inspects the materials; manufacturing and process checking for quality is done by the operating organization; inspection checks the final product; Quality Assurance conducts its audit.

Quality with a big Q

(Editor's note: This is the first in a series of articles on quality.)

When a customer comes to Western Electric, you know he expects a quality product. That part's simple. The complex part is what goes on in the Omaha Works to meet the customer's expectations.

From the time the raw materials come into the plant to the moment finished products are shipped to customers, three specific organizations play an important role in assuring that quality products are manufactured: the operating organization, the inspection organization, and Quality Assurance.

The operating organization deals with the plans and checks on quality involved in the actual manufacturing process. The inspection organization checks

samples of the final products, to see how the operating organization is performing. Quality Assurance provides an independent quality audit. Indirectly, Quality Assurance acts as an on-site customer's representative who reports to Western Electric management on the satisfactoriness of Omaha Works products.

To understand why quality plays such an important part at the Works, consider this: Say you're installing a new dining room light fixture on your ceiling. Your arms ache from holding the fixture as you try to fasten it from your perch on a wobbly ladder. You flick on the light switch and . . . nothing.

How do you feel? Hopping mad puts it mildly. The frustration that results in a situation like this is no different than that experienced by customers when they have problems with Western Electric products.

"Say we ship a customer a product that's defective and he gets it in the field," said Bob Denton of Statistical Quality Control (SQC) Engineering. "Sometimes installation schedules are tight. If he doesn't discover the product

is defective before installing it, he'll have to yank it out and that costs time and labor. He not only misses his schedules but it costs him at least twice as much to install that particular product."

The customer may not complain directly to Western Electric about problems, but he may decide never to buy that product again from W.E.

"Because no one is complaining doesn't mean we are giving the customer a good quality product," Denton cautioned. Without feedback, pinpointing defects in products becomes an even more difficult task.

SQC helps the operating organization by "designing statistical sampling plans to make sure that the products being manufactured meet the quality levels expected by the customer," Denton said. A goal set by management is that "we have no more than five products below normal quality levels during the whole year."

Toward that end, the operators keep an eye on quality by checking their own work for defects as they assemble a product. Next, as part of the operating organization's role in assuring quality, process checkers look over a sample of the operators' work. If a piece is defective, it goes back to an operator for repair.

Checking for quality isn't as simple as it may sound. "There may be an error in sampling," Denton said, "or there may be a machine malfunction" that affects quality.

Defects also may result from human error, even when a person is working conscientiously. "Most of the quality problems are people problems. It's better to do it right the first time," he said.

It helps to take pride in one's work to minimize human error, because "quality is an attitude," Denton said. Striving for quality also becomes easier if one realizes that quality products can only benefit Works employees. A product made right the first time boosts shop efficiency, which can increase the amount of a worker's wage incentive pay. Don't forget, Denton added, the positive effect on job security when satisfied customers keep coming back for quality products.

(Next issue: the inspection organization)



PROCESS CHECK . . . Claudia Perchal (seated) applies a second fill as waterproofing on a 710 connector part, while Arlene Boyd — a process checker — checks her work.

He's a 'Good Neighbor' to have

Give Bob Laudenback a couple of bats and balls and he's apt to organize a complete baseball and softball program. That's what he did 11 years ago when a youngster's parent handed him equipment and asked Laudenback to start a youths' sports program in Wahoo.

Today Laudenback, of Dept. 1231, is director of the Wahoo Youth Activities Association, which consists of 23 boys' baseball and girls' softball teams. For his efforts in behalf of youths, Laudenback has received a Good Neighbor Award for 1977 from the Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben. He is one of 165 persons from Nebraska and Western Iowa so chosen for the honor.

The award came as a surprise. "After so many years you just do what must be done, and you don't want any recognition," Laudenback said.

Practically every evening and on weekends Laudenback can be found on the ball diamond, where he makes sure the equipment and field are in order. He often stays for games, tending to any problems that may arise and sometimes substituting as a coach, he said. Afterward, he's back to clean up.

As director, he also schedules the games, places and times, and coordinates registration of coaches and players. Arranging for transportation is included among his many duties.

"If you ask my wife, she'll tell you I spend 24 hours a day" working on the ball program, Laudenback said. While his wife, Mary, may not understand why he devotes so much of his spare time to the program, "her patience and sacrifice are always there," he said.

"Insanity," he quipped, explains his involvement. But seriously, "I like to see a kid do something constructive. Maybe I'm just a frustrated athletic coach. Then, too, you see a lot of these kids and how they appreciate it."

Laudenback also assists the American Legion with its junior baseball program, and is responsible for having attracted three Legion tournaments to Wahoo during the last several years. He has helped organize a benefit softball tournament for the Nebraska Easter Seal Society, too.

He became interested in ball for youngsters when he helped with the Little League more than 20 years ago, he said. Through the years he has learned what he thinks should be stressed in sports for youths: fundamentals.

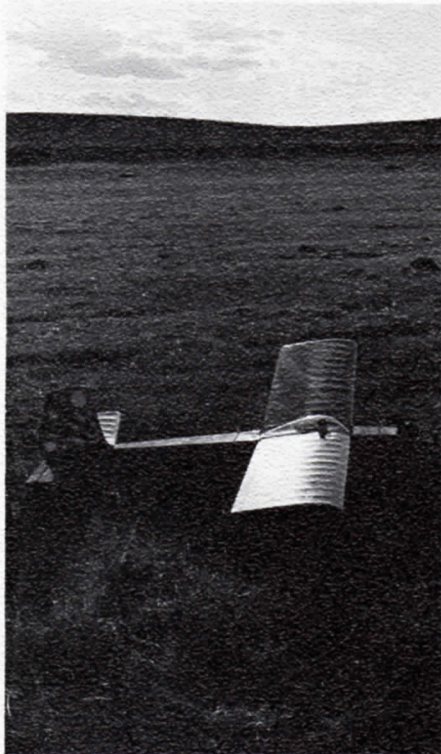
It may sound cliché, but "We don't really care about winning or losing," Laudenback said. "In fact, we don't give any trophies or awards to the teams." What matters is learning the game and enjoying it, he said.

That approach to organized ball, he believes, has eliminated problems with parents who otherwise may complain about their child's treatment on a team. The parents themselves are getting caught up in Laudenback's good sportsmanship ideal. "They're even starting to applaud the opponents' plays, now," he said.



Laudenback

It only proves true what was stated by Wahoo's Mayor James Fauver in nominating "Wahoo's Little Big Man" (Laudenback stands 5 feet 5) for the Good Neighbor Award: "He sets an example of leadership for all ages."



No need to bring any parachutes

(Continued from Page 6)

perienced flier does that for him, then Kummer takes the controls when his craft is in flight. Kummer has a helicopter, which is even more difficult to fly "because there are so many more variables. A helicopter just doesn't want to fly unless you make it," he said. He also is building three other crafts, all planes.

Takeoffs and landings are the most difficult aspects of the hobby, and having an experienced flier taking the controls for a beginner is common practice. That's true even if the beginner is a licensed pilot like Kummer.

"It's absolute disaster otherwise," Hickman said. For example, one must adjust to having a plane's functions reversed as it flies toward the controller — right becomes left, and so on.

EACH RADIO control plane operates on its own frequency, and in a gathering of operators, it is important that only one plane of a given frequency be flown at one time. An operator also must be careful not to let a plane go too high or far, or he can lose orientation. A transmitter's

range is "about as far as you can see the plane" Hickman said. Normal altitude range is from 40 to 400 feet.

Planes have wingspans from 18 inches to one-quarter the size of a real plane, but most have 60-inch spans. Hobbyists prefer balsa wood because balsa is lighter than plastic and stronger for its weight. Plastic planes are easier to construct, but aren't as readily repaired as balsa models. The average balsa plane can be built in about 40 hours; detailed planes to scale may require from 200 to 500 hours of work.

"Smaller planes are touchier to fly than larger planes," said Don Kaar of Dept. 741, because they are affected more by wind currents. In the four years he has been flying, Kaar has built six planes and two others are under construction. "It's a challenge to keep getting a little bit better at flying different planes."

Page Nolan thinks there is more to the hobby than challenge. The way he sees it — and his wife agrees — "It keeps me off the streets."