


Northwestern
SINCE 1879
Sterling

December, 1985

The Lightning Bolt

NORTHWESTERN STEEL AND WIRE COMPANY · STERLING, ILLINOIS 61081

Happy Holidays!



*May these be the gifts
your Christmas will hold —
heartwarming happenings,
memories of gold,
all of the good things
that you're dreaming of...
and love.*

Merry Christmas

NSW's Dependability Key To Business With Central Steel & Wire

Central Steel and Wire Company places great value on dependability.

The Chicago service center chain giant has built its reputation on a no-nonsense, no frills way of doing business. For 76 years Central has built a following of loyal customers by carefully selecting its suppliers, placing heavy emphasis on dependability.

Central characterizes itself as a traditional, old-line company that sticks to business basics. Their success is attributed to the extensive inventory that they carry, processing capabilities, quality and service.

Northwestern helps Central maintain its reputation for dependability and service by, in turn, providing dependable mill rollings and consistent high quality products at a competitive price. Quality and service are the prime reasons Central Steel and Wire Company has done business with Northwestern over the past 20 years, according to Vice President of Purchasing **Edward J. Kentra**.

"We depend on our suppliers, and we deem our present list of suppliers the cream of the crop," Kentra said. "Central votes on its suppliers' performance with its order book...improved tons means a supplier has earned them."

Kentra said he feels that the Northwestern sales personnel are competent and well informed of steel's competitive market changes. **Betty Henson** is the inside sales correspondent handling this account, while **Ray Bauer** is the outside salesman.

Northwestern has shown a 40% increase in tonnage shipments to Central Steel and Wire Company for calendar year 1985 to date versus the same period last year. With an inventory of 2,300 items totaling over 200,000 tons, Central Steel and Wire solicits between 25,000 and 30,000 customers over 25 states and portions of Canada. Central ranks as one of Northwestern's top 10 Hot Rolled customers, purchasing the complete range of structural products, including manufacturers' wire.

Kentra said that while current business conditions are favorable in terms of the volume of orders, profit margins leave much to be desired. He said he is concerned about imports and the "downstream dumping" of finish-



Central Steel and Wire Company, Chicago, is one of Northwestern's top 10 Hot Rolled customers. Characterized as a traditional, old-line company, Central places heavy emphasis on quality and service from suppliers such as Northwestern.

ed goods. "Downstream dumping" refers to material that arrives in the form of a manufactured product, such as automobiles, farm equipment, and machinery. Because these items are imported, Central loses in two ways...they are unable to sell steel to the overseas manufacturer and the domestic manufacturer, who lost the sale, will not be buying steel either.

In looking to the future, Kentra said he continues to see Central Steel and Wire as a conservative company in their approach to new ventures. At present they have no plans for any major company expansion.

Central is debt-free, with no long- or short-term debt, and future plans for expansion would depend on market conditions.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

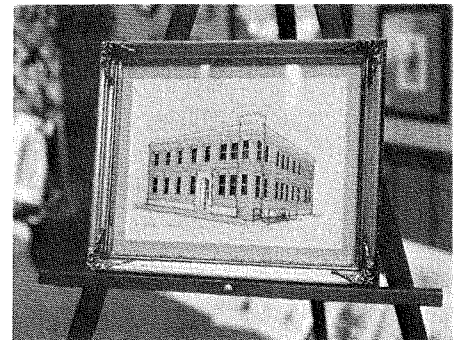
500 Attend NSW Break-Even Party

Approximately 500 hourly and salaried NSW employees and their families took advantage of the opportunity to visit with President Robert M. Wilthew and his staff at the Company Break-Even Party held Dec. 8.

Mr. Wilthew would like to express his appreciation to these people for taking a few minutes from their busy schedules to join in the celebration.

A display of photos taken at the party appears on the back page of this issue.

Thanks to you...we made it!



Shown is a pen-and-ink drawing of Northwestern's Main Office Building, which was given to Lil Tousley as a retirement gift by fellow employees. Lil retired recently as personal secretary to Company Board Chairman Martin Dillon and Vice Chairman Peter Dillon.

Tripmaster Should Record Leased Fleet Savings

The computer age has come to Northwestern's leased fleet operation with the introduction of the Rockwell International Corporation Tripmaster Trip Recording System.

The Tripmaster recording system will be installed on 24 of Northwestern's tractors which are leased from Ryder Truck Leasing, Inc. Among the most important information that will be monitored by the on-board recording devices will be three factors that have a major effect on fuel economy — vehicle speed, engine over-revs and engine idle.

The idea behind the Tripmaster system is to allow the driver and Company management an opportunity to collect and analyze information concerning the operation of Northwestern's rigs. Actually, the Tripmaster system is designed to be a productivity enhancer, since drivers will have feedback as to how the rig is performing under their direction.

Each rig equipped with a Tripmaster system will be monitored every moment the engine is running by an on-board device which will record the data onto a cassette tape. The tape can then be "dumped" onto an extraction module located at Northwestern's Company Truck Scales.

The system will report such data as departure/arrival time, number of hours on the road, miles driven, speed (if driven faster than 60 m.p.h. during that trip), engine idle time, and engine rev speed.

In this way the driver can adjust the operation of the rig to get optimum performance, in terms of miles per gallon, and number and longevity of stops.

One of the expected savings through

the Tripmaster system is through reduced maintenance. The system features a software module to help automate preventive maintenance scheduling. The same computer used to process the Tripmaster data automatically compares vehicle

odometer readings with predefined maintenance intervals for accurate assessment of vehicle maintenance.

The Tripmaster system was explained to Northwestern truck drivers at a recent brunch at Emerald Hill Country Club.



Northwestern's truck drivers learn about the Tripmaster on-board computer system which is designed to assist in raising productivity levels and save cost of operations.

Shelby Thomas Learns About Dad's Job Through Science Project

Father and daughter came to a better understanding of one another at the **Dennis Thomas** household recently through their efforts for the Montmorency Grade School Science Fair.

Dennis, who is a Glader (nail machine) operator at Northwestern's East Plant, encouraged his daughter **Shelby** to research the nail-making process as her science project entry at the annual grade school fair.

The suggestion proved to be a good one and Shelby, who took the suggestion and spent several weeks researching the project and creating a display of various types of nails which are produced at Northwestern, captured a first place at the Science Fair.

Shelby, who is 11 years old, is a sixth grader at Montmorency Grade School.

"She really did all the work. I think that's what impressed the judges most. I steered her in the right direction but you could tell that it was something that she did herself," Dennis said.

"She got a feel for what I do at work and an appreciation for the nail-making process," he said. "Lots of

people don't have any idea what a Glader is. Her project was very informative."

Shelby said there were about 20 first place ribbons awarded out of the three classes which participated in the Science Fair.



Shelby Thomas (left) and her father Dennis, who is a Glader operator, display the poster that Shelby created as part of her science project on nail making. Shelby, a sixth grader at Montmorency School, took first place at the Fair.

**Company Photographer
Sets New Schedule**

Beginning in April, a photographer will be available only at periodic times during the month.

For a schedule of when the photographer will be available and to make appointments for pictures for the *Lightning Bolt*, call Ext. 211.

STEP Team Seeks To Reduce Scrap By 5%

The Security Through Employee Participation (STEP) Team, one of four Labor Management Participation Teams (LMPT) at Northwestern's Plant 4 in Rock Falls, is currently working on a project that could, if implemented, amount to tremendous savings.

The team identified a problem on the Plant 4 Electro-Weld machines. The stay wire feed is currently too long, causing an overhang which projects over the outside weld of the product. The excess overhang must then be sheared off and scrapped.

The STEP Team feels that if the overhang can be reduced to a few inches, perhaps by a proposed brake-and-clutch system, scrap could be reduced 4% to 5% in this department.

IDEA Team

The IDEA Team is awaiting quotations from the Purchasing Department on comparison of costs of propane tanks for departmental tractors.

To reduce the Company's propane costs, the Team is seeking a low bid vendor.

The Team is also working on a lighting system for the warehouse and is currently gathering data to determine possible cost savings through the use of high pressure sodium lighting. It is believed that a high pressure sodium lighting system would be highly efficient in that fewer light fixtures would be needed, and less electricity would be consumed, when compared to fluorescent lighting.

HOPE TEAM

Northwestern's HOPE Team is looking into the possibility of providing a better system of feeding rod into the drawing machines.

Presently, rod often is pulled off the spools more than one strand at a time and trips the shut-off switch. The operator must then clear the tangle and restart the machine.

The Team feels a better alignment into the machine would alleviate the problem.

RISE TEAM

The RISE Team is currently looking into causes of wire breaks on the No. 14 remesh machine. The Team is collecting data and will make a presentation at a later date.

Labor Management Participation Teams Honored At Anniversary Brunch

Members of Northwestern's LMPT Teams and their wives met with representatives from United Steelworkers Local 3720 and management of Northwestern Steel and Wire Company for brunch at Emerald Hill Country Club recently, in recognition of the one-year anniversary of the Labor Management Participation Team (LMPT) program at Northwestern's Plants 4 and 6.

Representatives of each of the teams spoke briefly, outlining the projects tackled over the course of the year.

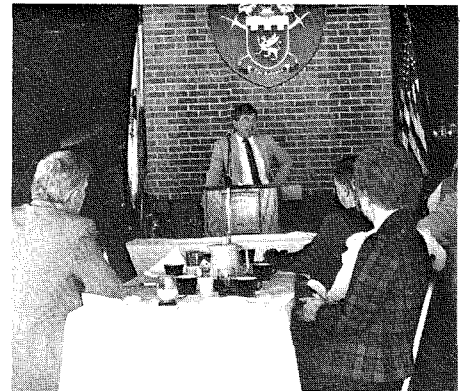
John Tomczak, President of Local 3720, reaffirmed the support of Local 3720 Union leadership towards the LMPT program.

Robert M. Wilthew, President of Northwestern Steel and Wire Company, praised the LMPT program and similar participation teams currently

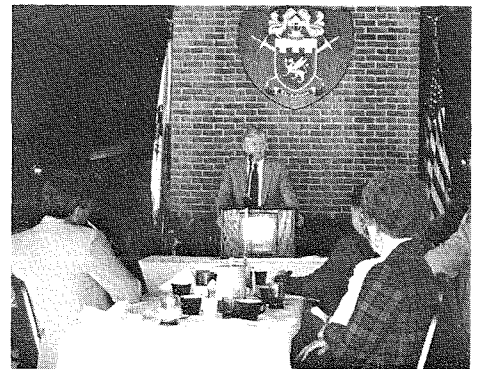
underway at the Company.

Also speaking at the brunch was **Mike Mullen**, Vice President - Operations, Merchant Wire Products.

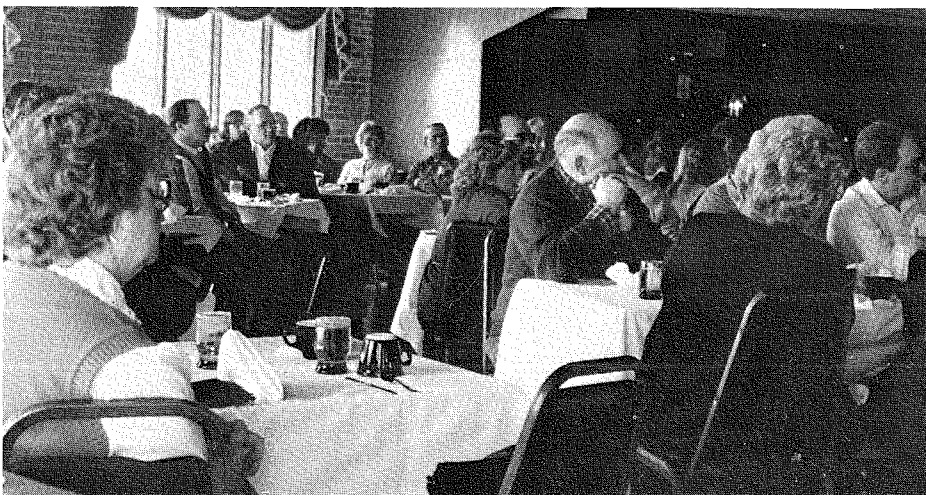
Following the brunch, a tour of Plant 4 in Rock Falls was held for the benefit of LMPT members' wives.



Mike Mullen, Vice President Operations - Merchant Wire Products, congratulates members of Northwestern's LMPT program at the anniversary brunch.



President **Robert M. Wilthew** addresses a group of LMPT volunteers and their wives at a recent brunch in honor of the program's first anniversary.



Members of Local 3720 who participate in the LMPT Program and their wives were honored at a recent brunch at Emerald Hill Country Club. This was the First Anniversary of the LMPT Participative Management Program at Plants 4 and 6.

The following is a letter written to the LMPT Steering Committee from Kirkwood Consulting Associates, Inc., congratulating members of Northwestern's LMPT program on a successful first year:

Rock Falls LMPT Steering Committee
and LMPT's
Northwestern Steel and Wire Co.
c/o Wendy Davis
121 Wallace St. - P.O. Box 618
Sterling, IL 61081

Gentlemen:

It has now been one year since the establishment of the first Labor-Management Participation Team at Rock Falls, and each of you is to be congratulated on your efforts and the truly outstanding results you have achieved. The Steering Committee, Facilitator Wendy Davis, and each of the Teams - RISE, STEP, HOPE, IDEA and the Post Team while that plant was operating -- has conducted itself in a responsible, professional manner and has produced results that have been a significant part of Northwestern's climb back to profitability.

My associates and I deal with, and are extremely aware of, various LMPT efforts in the other steel companies, and there is no question that the LMPT's at Rock Falls rank right at the top of the list. The support of John Tomczack and Local 3720, and of Bob Wilthew, Pete Dillon and the Northwestern management has paid off with an excellent LMPT program.

Our congratulations on a great job, and we look forward with you to even better achievements in your second year.

Very truly yours,
John H. Kirkwood
President

Best Retirement Wishes

Best wishes to the following employees who began their retirement on March 1.

Fred Sneek, Plant 2 Machine Shop, 35 years.

Curt Lewis, 24-Inch Mill Reheat, 31 years.

Donald Adams, Plant 2 Machine Shop, 38 years.

Wallace Stern, 24-Inch Mill, 16 years.

John Cheshire, 24-Inch Weld Shop, 31 years.

Charles Berkeley, 24-Inch Shipping, 31 years.

Ray Berry, Plant 2 Crane Operator, 31 years.

Cecil Bragg, Plant 2 Pipe Shop, 31 years.

New Appointments

As of March 1, 1986, the following changes will be in effect:

Harvey Hill is appointed 12-Inch Mill Builder Foreman. He can be reached at Ext. 386 and will carry beeper No. 194.

Bill Stanley is appointed 12-Inch Mill Foreman. He can be reached at Ext. 321 and will carry beeper No. 325.

Tom Mullen is appointed Raw Materials Supervisor in the Furnace Department. He can be reached at Ext. 366 and will carry beeper No. 320.

Hot Rolled Salesmen Attend Sales Planning Seminar

Members of Northwestern Steel and Wire Company's Hot Rolled Sales Department recently held a Planning Seminar at the Rock Falls Ramada Inn and Rock River Country Club.

Theme for the 3-day session was "Planning Makes The Difference." Vice President of Sales - Hot Rolled Products, **C.H. Biermann**, discussed the progress Northwestern has made over the past year. It was just one year ago the group was apprised of the responsibility the sales department had in improving the tonnage in the markets they serve.

V.L. Johnson, Hot Rolled Manager of Sales, emphasized the importance of selling those products that give us the best return.

In other facets of the seminar, the salesmen were given instruction on territory and sales call planning, "housekeeping," logistics of opera-

tions at Northwestern, sales quotas, and plant capabilities review.

The salesmen also benefitted from

the professional services of Rick McIntyre who put on a Telemarketing Training Seminar.



Members of Northwestern Steel and Wire Company's Hot Rolled Sales Department recently attended a sales planning seminar in Rock Falls. Theme for the meeting was "Planning Makes The Difference."

Northwestern Personnel Files

Mike Murphy

Northwestern Steel and Wire welcomes **Mike Murphy** as a new Merchant Wire inside salesman. Mike will be taking over the territory presently being handled by **Mike Preston**, who will in the near future become an outside salesman in the state of Ohio.

Mike brings to NSW eight years of retail sales experience with True Value Hardware.

A native of Arcola, IL, Mike, who is 26, graduated with a music degree from Eastern Illinois University. He and his wife, Glenna, and their two children, Brian, 6, and Sarah, 3, live in Sterling.

Mike said he enjoys music and aerobic sports.



Bill Ackert

Bill Ackert, one of NSW's inside correspondents for the Hot Rolled Products Division, has been promoted to outside salesman, effective April 1.

He will be servicing accounts in Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, & the western edges of Nebraska & South Dakota.

Bill and his wife, Mary Ann, and their children, Andrea, Joe, and Ben, will be making their home in the Denver, CO area.

Before becoming a correspondent, Bill spent 10 years working in NSW's mills, with four of those years as a shipping and production foreman in the 12-Inch Mill.



Northwestern's Employee Anniversaries

30 Years

Charles Ager, 3/20/56, Plant 2 Crane Mechanics

25 Years

Kenneth Nusbaum, 3/14/61, Wire Mill Machine Shop.

Arthur Zinke, 3/20/61, Galvanizer.

George DePuy, 3/20/61, Plant 2 Electrical.

James Percycoc, 3/20/61, Plant 3 Pipefitters.

Jerry Reeher, 3/20/61, Wire Mill Electrical.

Walter Dyche, 3/20/61, Plant 3 Millwrights.

Richard Hutchinson, 3/21/61, Plant 1 Pipefitters.

William Helms, 3/21/61, Wire Mill Millwrights.

Edward Tschosik, 3/27/61, Plant 2 Electrical.

Larry Hart, 3/27/61, Electric Furnace.

Jay Francque, 3/27/61, Salaried Payroll, 20-24" Shipping.

Billy Gaither, 3/29/61, Scrap Yard.

Paul Fritz, 3/30/61, 20-24" Shipping and Finishing.

Raymond Bass, 3/30/61, Carpenter Shop.

20-Years

Robert Adams, 3/5/66, Plant 4 Shipping.

Walter Wagner, 3/7/66, Billet Caster.

Peter Barajas, 3/7/66, Billet Caster.

Howard Bluhm, 3/9/66, Guards.

Edgar Weakley, 3/11/66, Conditioning.

Roger Johnson, 3/11/66, Plant 4 Shift Tractor.

Richard Irion, 3/13/66, Plant 1 Shipping.

Robert Jones, 3/13/66, Salaried Payroll, Scrap Yard.

Jose Garcia, 3/14/66, 14-Inch Mill.

Arthur Johnson, Jr., 3/23/66, Over-the-road Truck Driver.

Wayne Jones, 3/23/66, Billet Caster.

Lewis Frieberg, 3/26/66, Wire Mill Millwrights.

Richard Hardy, 3/26/66, Plant 2 Millwrights.

Darrel Workman, 3/28/66, Over-the-road Truck Driver.

Gerald Anderson, 3/28/66, Plant 5

Inspection.

William Yarbrough, Jr., 3/29/66, Field Fence.

Samuel Dean, 3/30/66, General Millwrights.

Melvin Wade, 3/31/66, Brick-masons.

15-Years

Robert Collinson, 3/1/71, Nail Department.

Douglas Kested, 3/3/71, 14-Inch Mill Shipping.

William Manon, 3/5/71, Plant 4 Electrical.

John Sotelo, 3/6/71, Electro-Weld.

Richard Coffey, 3/11/71, Plant 4 Drawing Room.

Janet Vaughn, 3/15/71, Private Payroll, Purchasing Department.

Bruce Jackson, 3/17/71, Plant 4 Drawing Room.

Mike Fitzgerald, 3/17/71, Electro-Weld.

Ralph Perales, 3/17/71, Drawing Room.

Marjorie Bushman, 3/18/71, Plant 4, Salaried Payroll, Medical.

The ABC's Of Safe Winter Driving

Winter doesn't cause accidents...but it can turn your *little* mistakes into *dangerous ones!* A winter accident is just one mistake away. There is one traffic death every 10 minutes, 76% of the time due to improper driving.

Pedestrians have accidents, too...17% of all traffic deaths. Watch out at crossings, especially when visibility and conditions are poor. It's up to you not to make that one mistake by knowing how to cope with winter conditions.

There is still some time to get your vehicle ready before the snow starts to pile up. Winter car maintenance is a little more trouble — but it's well worthwhile.

1. **Brakes** - Have them checked, adjusted or repaired if necessary.
2. **Fluid levels** - Keep battery, brake, radiator, transmission and rear end filled.
3. **Oil** - Change to a lighter winter weight oil (double-check your car owner's manual for recommended grade).
4. **Battery** - Test for full charge and good connections. Get a new one, if necessary.
5. **Tires** - Put on snow tires. Remember not to mix radial tires with regular snow tires. That can increase the risk of a skid. Also, make sure the tires are inflated to the recommended pressure. (Note: If traveling in some western states tire chains may be required.)
6. **Lights** - Double-check your headlights, brakes and turn signals. Keep lights free of snow for better visibility.
7. **Exhaust System** - Have muffler

and exhaust systems checked for leaks. Always keep a window open while driving.

8. **Windshield** - Put antifreeze window washer in the washer. Make sure wiper blades are in good condition and the defroster is working.

If you plan to do any long range traveling, it is a good idea to put together an emergency kit. Most of these items can be purchased at a local hardware store. Your kit should include: Long-handled snow shovel; rock salt; traction mats; sand or even "kitty litter"; tire chains; tow chain; booster cables; snow brush and ice scraper; flares; flashlight; blanket or sleeping bag; candle and some energy food such as nuts, fruit, candy bars.

Now that your car is in tip top shape, you're just about ready to go! First clear *all* of the windows of ice and snow -- the whole windshield, side and rear windows, the hood and top of car. Danger can come from any direction. Warm up your engine a few minutes before you drive.

While you're warming up your engine, turn on your defroster and heater to warm up the inside of the car, too. The last few winters have been super cold. Placing a trouble light near the battery, a block heater, or a heated dip stick will help get your car started in the morning.

See and be seen -- clean salt and road film from your lights. Use your low beams during the day when sky is overcast. Park smart --back it in. You'll have an easier time getting out in the morning. Try not to park facing uphill -- it will be hard to get moving.

Now that you are ready -- with your

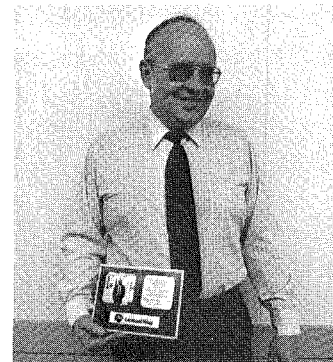
car in top shape and emergency equipment in hand -- get set, know what kind of trouble to expect and how to handle it. Go slow! Easy does it whether you're starting, steering or stopping...and remember! Safety belts are *never* out of season! (Buckle-up and have a safe winter driving season.)

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Best Retirement Wishes

Northwestern Steel and Wire Company wishes a long and happy retirement to the following employees:

- Effective December 1, 1985**
Paul Doane, Plant 4 Shipping, 30 years.
Wayne Williams, Private Payroll, Merchant Wire Sales, 29 years.



David Hadley displays the volunteer service award given him by the local United Way at the 1985 United Way Annual Dinner. David has done auditing work for the Community Chest for the past 20 years.

Northwestern's Employee Anniversaries

December
40-Years
Joseph McCleary, 12/3/45, Wire Mill Drawing.

35-Years
Kent Foreman, 12/26/50, 12-Inch Mill Crane Operator.

30-Years
Wendell Davis, 12/12/55, Private Payroll, facilitator for EIT and LMPT programs.

25-Years
Martin Riveria, 12/6/60, Over The Road Driver.
Glenn Kastner, 12/10/60, Billet Caster.

15-Years
Steven Dowd, 12/21/70, Scrap Yard.
James Foshee, 12/21/70, Wire Mill Millwright.
Carol Mabrey, 12/21/70, Private Payroll, 46-Inch Mill

Tips On Submitting Medical Claims

Pensioners are asked to bring the following items with them when submitting medical claims to the Insurance Department:

1. Medical explanation of treatment
2. Itemized bill
3. Completed claim form

Having this information in hand when submitting medical bills will save pensioners unnecessary trips to the office and will reduce correspondence and paperwork for the Insurance Department.

