January, 1988



## The Lightning Bolt

NORTHWESTERN STEEL AND WIRE COMPANY - STERLING, ILLINOIS 61081

#### Inside This Issue

#### Anthony Supply -A Major NSW Distributor

Over the years Anthony Supply, Greenville, IL, has become Northwestern's major Wire Products distributor in Southern Illinois. Learn more about this exciting company on page 2.

## First Hourly QIP Facilitators Named

Northwestern names two new QIP Facilitators - this time from the hourly work force. See page 3.

#### **Records Section**

December was a busy month at the 14-Inch Mill. A monthly production record was established and a 24-hour shipping record fell. See stories and photos on page 6.

#### A Lot Of Nails

1987 was a banner year for Northwestern nail shipments and 1988 could be as good or better. This story appears on page 8.

# Transformer Failure Cripples Steelmaking

Two failed electric transformers within a month idled two of the Company's three 400-ton electric furnaces, leaving the Company with just a temporary transformer in the face of record back-logs in semifinished steel orders.

As the Company began to lay off melt shop employees late in December, Commonwealth Edison was able to install two additional temporary transformers - welcome news for the New Year. One of the temporary transformers is on line and powering a second furnace at Northwestern. The third transformer, obtained from an Indiana utility, will go on line by the end of the month.

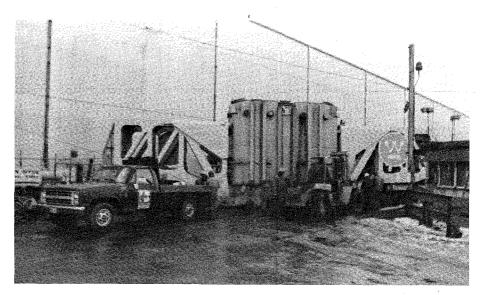
As a result, the Company is hoping to slash projected losses due to curtail-

ed sales of semifinished steel significantly from the \$50 million originally expected.

The chronology of the tragedy begins nearly two years ago when the first of the Company's main transformers to fail (the east transformer) went out of service January 31, 1986. At that time Commonwealth Edison had a smaller transformer brought in from the Chicago area. The main transformer was placed back in service six months later.

Another main transformer (the west transformer) failed on October 6, 1987, setting the stage for the disaster that occured when the east transformer again failed on December 15.

(continued on page 7)



Northwestern Steel and Wire Company found itself in a desperate situation after this main transformer failed on December 15, just over two months after a previous transformer failure. This transformer is being transported to a Westinghouse laboratory where it will be repaired and eventually returned to Northwestern.

## **Anthony Supply Keeps Customers Happy**

Just off mile marker 45 on Interstate 70 east of St. Louis, in Greenville, a small community of some 5,000 inhabitants, lies Anthony Supply, a valued Northwestern customer.

J.W. Anthony opened up shop in 1934, as a John Deere dealer. After World War II the company began selling baling wire and nails. In 1955, as Anthony Supply came into being, the company expanded into barbed wire, welded wire fabric and poultry netting and now handles Northwestern's entire line.

It was at this time that the Company's current President, John Anthony, joined Anthony Supply.

Today, Anthony Supply has built a reputation around pricing and service that has endeared its many customers, who consist mainly of lumber yards and ready mixes.

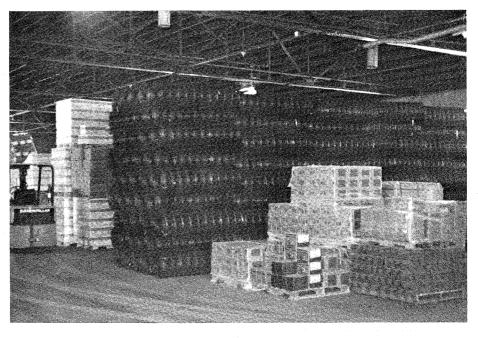
"When we get a customer we seem to keep them," Anthony said modestly. "We have very loyal customers. We run things like a family - we pay attention to our customers' needs."

There are 10 employees in the Anthony Supply "Family" and there are no strict job classifications. "We all pitch in where we are needed," Anthony said. Even Anthony, who is President of the Company, and Chet York, Secretary and Treasurer, often



This familiar sign greets visitors to Greenville, a small community in southern Illinois, which is home to Anthony Supply. Anthony Supply has built a reputation around pricing and service that has endeared its many customers, who consist mainly of lumber yards and ready mixes.





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help unload shipments of wire products.

L.E. "Butch" Viering, former Sales Manager for the Wire Products Division, handled the Anthony account for many years. Since Viering's retirement, the account is managed by Denny Redfield, Northwestern's present Manager of Sales.

Even today Viering said he remains in contact with John. "John and I are very close. We still keep in touch regularly," Viering said. "John is an avid collector of small gasoline engines and antique farm implements."

Viering said he remembers the start of the business relationship between Anthony Supply and Northwestern Steel. Northwestern made Anthony a special deal on surplus barbed wire. Since that time Anthony Supply has been a regular customer.

"I began dealing with Anthony Supply in 1973, but never had the opportunity to personally visit their firm until last year," Northwestern's **Denny Redfield**, Manager of Sales, Wire

Products Division, said. "On my first visit to Anthony Supply I was very impressed with their operation, and particularly the attention paid to their customers' needs."

"John is very conscientious about commitments his company makes and this fact is recognized and appreciated by their many loyal customers.

"Even in light of economic changes in their area over the past several years, Anthony Supply continues to show growth, and to this day remains our major distributor in that area. Northwestern and Anthony Supply continue to have a very close relationship. I consider Anthony Supply a very "special" customer and we try to handle the account as such," Redfield said.

Northwestern's territorial salesman calling on Anthony Supply is John Asumendi, and the inside salesmen handling the account are Al Lopez and Mike Dunn.

\* \* \* \*

#### Larry Miller, Jack Wilson Become First Hourly QIP Program Facilitators

Larry Miller, an East Plant Millwright, and Jack Wilson, a Brickmason, became the first hourly OIP Facilitators.

Miller has nearly 25 years of service with Northwestern Steel and Wire Company, and has been a union representative serving as Workers' Compensation Committeeman and Vice President of Local 63 of the United Steelworkers of America.

Wilson has 28 years of service with the Company and has been a union Grievance Committeeman since 1983. Miller and Wilson join the staff of two other QIP Facilitators, Lanny Munz and Chuck Bennett.

With the formation of more QIP Teams, which will total 40 by March, Miller and Wilson each will be charged with overseeing 10 of those teams.

As part of the Company's expansion of the QIP program, Frank Rausa has been appointed Manager, Training and Development, in the Human Resources Department. His primary responsibilities will include coordinating the activities of the Facilitators for the Quality Improvement Program, and to organize and coordinate the training and education program for all Northwestern employees.

Miller, a member of the Wire Division QIP Steering Committee since last spring, recently attended a QIP/LMPT Seminar conducted by the

United Steelworkers International.

"The Steelworkers have not always been in support of the QIP Program. I have been skeptical about the program. But we have received assurances from top management that none of the QIP Teams will be dealing with anything contractual between the Union and the Company," Miller said.

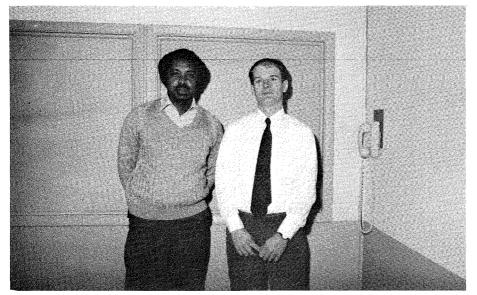
"I think that the QIP teams have a place, just as the Unions have a place. I feel that we should become involved in solving problems and try to save the Company money so we can keep jobs at an adequate compensation level."

Miller and his wife Daphne have two boys, Todd and Troy, both away from home. Miller said he is currently seeking an Associate's degree in Business and Data Processing at Sauk Valley College.

Wilson began with the Company in 1959 as an Inspector at the East Plant. He later bid into the West Plant Cranes and then worked at the 12-Inch Mill.

Wilson and his wife, Jessie, make their home in Rock Falls. The Wilsons have four girls, Jacquelyn, Jeanette, Joy and Julie, away from home, and one son, Jonathan, at home. Jack said he likes to spend his leisure working around the home.

While Miller and Wilson become the first hourly facilitators, other Union representatives are active in the QIP program.



Cedric Patterson (left), Supervisor, Straight and Cut Drawing Department, and Mike Quick, Steel Division Sales Correspondent, were recently elected to the East Coloma School Board.



Newly named QIP Facilitator Larry Miller (left) meets with a QIP team recently. Miller and Jack Wilson become the first hourly QIP Facilitators.



Jack Wilson joins a staff of three other QIP Facilitators. Wilson and Larry Miller are the first hourly QIP Facilitators.

#### Two Employees Named To School Board

Two Northwestern employees have been named to the East Coloma School Board.

Cedric Patterson, Supervisor, Straight and Cut Drawing Department, and Mike Quick, Steel Division Sales Correspondent, were elected to the School Board in November.

Patterson, who was also elected Secretary of the Board, had been previously appointed to fill out the term of former Board Member Mike Mason, who resigned.

Patterson and his wife Myrtis live in Rock Falls and have three children, Resl, Cedric, Jr., and Ursula.

Quick and his wife Cathy have two children, Cassie, 11, and Keri, 9.

#### **Northwestern Personnel Files**

#### Judi Golden

Judi Golden has been named Inside Sales Representative for the Steel Division.

She will be handling the major corporate accounts for that Division.

Judi lives in Rock Falls and has been an employee of Northwestern for approximately 18 years, with a great deal of experience in the Data



Processing Department handling the order entry process.

Judi replaces Betty Henson who has elected to retire and has moved to Florida with her husband Jack.

#### Ken Walls

Ken Walls has been named resident salesman for the Steel Division serving Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and portions of New York state and Ohio.

A graduate of the University of Iowa, Ken has been a member of the Steel Division's sales team since April, 1985.

Mark Vest, former representative for this

territory, has elected to resign his position with Northwestern.

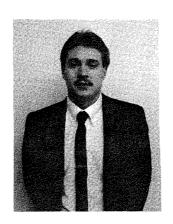
Ken and his wife, Nelda, have two children, Ken Jr. and Patricia, and will be making their home in the greater Pittsburgh, PA area.



#### Jeff Conboy

Jeff becomes an inside Steel Division Sales Representative servicing accounts in Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, and parts of Illinois and Indiana.

Ken Walls, who formerly had been the Sales Representative for that area, has accepted a promotion to area salesman for Northwestern in the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania area.



Jeff and his wife, Melissa, have a son, Jeffery, Jr., and live in the Sterling/Rock Falls area. Jeff is 24 years old and is currently attending Sauk Valley College where he is majoring in Business Administration.

#### Best Retirement Wishes

Best wishes for a long and happy retirement are extended to the following employees who have completed their years of service with Northwestern Steel and Wire Company.

Effective December 1, 1987 Leonard Staelens, Field Fence, 23 years.

James V. McDaniel, Plant 2 Mechanical, 38 years.

Thomas McCleary, 24-Inch Mill, 32 years.

Anis Rosnes, Deferred Vested, 20 years.

#### Effective January 1, 1988

James Lenington, Plant 1 Pipe Shop, 23 years.

Paul Feldthouse, Salaried, Security, 16 years.

**Billy Whiles**, Plant 2 Pipe Shop, 28 years.

#### Northwestern's January Anniversaries

40 Years

Raymond C. Schutt, Jr., 1/6/48, Nail Department.

#### 25 Years

Leona M. Richards, Salaried, 1/2/63, Communications Services.

David M. DeVries, 1/27/63, Electric Furnaces.

Alfonso A. Cantu, 1/27/63, 20-24" Shipping & Finishing.

Charles D. Howard, 1/27/63, Plant 2 Pipefitters.

Kenneth D. Burnett, 1/28/63, Salaried, Operations Management.

Federico Ramirez, 1/28/63, 46-Inch Mill. Jack Gardner, 1/28/63, Plant 3 Electrical.

Lawrence W. Swords, 1/28/63, Plant 3 Millwrights.

Marvin J. Alt, 1/28/63, Nail Department.

Orville L. Hatten 1/28/63, Wire Mill Shipping.

Robert Wittenauer, 1/28/63, 20-Inch Mill.

Ramon Gonzalez, Sr., 1/29/63, Wire Mill Drawing.

**Robert Morden,** 1/29/63, Wire Mill Millwrights.

Arnulfo Castillo, 1/30/63, 12-Inch Mill. Dieter H. Meinen, Salaried, 1/30/63, Rock Falls Shipping.

Donald L. Sisson, 1/30/63, Nail Department.

Jesus Miniel, Jr., 1/30/63, Electric Furnace.

Joe Melendres, 1/30/63, Bale Tie.

Ronald C. Tompkins, 1/30/63, Wire Mill Shipping.

Wilbur Schwindenhammer, 1/30/63, Plant 5 Welding.

Carlos Ortiz, 1/31/63, 12-Inch Mill.

Frank C. Miller, 1/31/63, Electric Furnace.

Gary P. Bauer, 1/31/63, Wire Mill Millwrights.

**J.D. Angleton**, 1/31/63, 20-24" Shipping and Finishing.

James B. Taets, 1/31/63, Plant 2 Welding.

John H. Cumby, 1/31/63, Wire Mill Drawing.

Larry J. Ege, 1/31/63, Plant 2 Welding. Lyle E. Hoyle, 1/31/63, General Millwrights.

Marian Nerstheimer, 1/31/63, General Millwrights.

Orlan M. Ohlwine, 1/31/63, Wire Mill Drawing.

**Praxedis J. Garcia**, 1/31/63, Billet Caster.

**Richard L. Castro**, 1/31/63, Plant 3 Welding.

Robert L. Lauritzen, Jr., 1/31/63, Wire Galvanizer.

Robert V. Martin, 1/31/63, 14-Inch Mill. Tommy C. Miller, 1/31/63, Plant 3 Welding. 20 Years

Atanacio Pena, 1/26/68, 20-24" Shipping & Finishing.

Ronald G. Carroll, 1/29/68, Plant 5 Millwrights.

#### 15 Years

**Dorman D. Lamb**, 1/5/73, Salaried, Scrap Yard.

Charles T. Turner, 1/7/73, 20-24" Shipping & Finishing.

Leon H. Woodin, 1/7/73, Bale Tie. Michael J. Reyes, 1/8/73, Plant 2 Elecrical

Clarence S. Porter, 1/9/73, Trial Crew West.

Bill J. Murray, 1/14/73, Wire Mill Shipping.

Dale J. Chandler, 1/14/73, 14-Inch Mill.

Delfino Rodriguez, 1/14/73, 46-Inch Mill.

Dennis D. Crouse, 1/14/73, Scrap Yard. Donald D. Hunter, 1/14/73, 14-Inch Finishing.

Raymond L. Saffell, 1/14/73, 20-24-Inch Shipping & Finishing.

Robert J. Cantu, 1/14/73, 20-24-Inch Shipping & Finishing.

Roy A. Jones, 1/14/73, 20-24-Inch Shipping & Finishing.

Samuel Rodriguez, 1/14/73, Netting. Scott F. Ackman, 1/14/73, Wire Mill

Shipping.

Rolando S. Ducoing, 1/15/73, Bale Tie.

James B. Ordean, 1/16/73, Plant 5 Electrical.

Raymond A. McCarty, 1/16/73, 24-Inch Mill.

John E. Loechel, 1/21/73, 14-Inch Finishing.

**Kenneth Mitchem**, 1/21/73, 20-24-Inch Shipping & Finishing.

Marvin J. Nutt, 1/21/73, Nail Department.

John W. Reynolds, 1/22/73, Roll Thread.

William R. Flynn, 1/22/73, 14-Inch Finishing.

Daniel S. Hermes, 1/23/73, 24-Inch Mill. Denver D. Cole, 1/23/73, 24-Inch Mill. Jerry W. Schriber, 1/25/73, 20-24-Inch Shipping & Finishing.

John W. Reifsteck, 1/25/73, Nail Department.

Lawrence K. Sandretto, 1/25/73, Plant 5 Welders.

Kenneth R. Heffelfinger, 1/26/73, Over-The-Road Truck Driver.

Randy M. Jacobs, 1/28/73, Netting.
10 Years

Ross T. Ferger, 1/17/28, Over-The-Road Truck Driver.

Anthony D. Fiorini, 1/19/78, Laboratory.

John R. Deets, 1/19/78, 24-Inch Mill. Relton L. Sharp, 1/19/78, 12-Inch Finishing-Bars.

James A. Winn, 1/20/78, 12-Inch Mill. Michael E. Sanders, 1/20/78, 12-Inch

Finishing-Bars.

Richard J. Lancaster, 1/20/78, 12-Inch Finishing - Bars.

Estel A. Keefer, 1/23/78, Nail Dept. John C. Law, 1/23/78, Wire Mill Draw-

Kris E. Wolf, 1/23/78, Barb Wire. Lloyd L. Sutton, 1/23/78, 12-Inch Mill. Myron L. Kramer, 1/23/78, 14-Inch

Myron L. Kramer, 1/23/78, 14-Inch Shipping.

Robert D. Knapp, 1/23/78, Nail Department.

William L. Smith, 1/23/78, 20-24-Inch Shipping and Finishing.

Art P. Ruiz, 1/24/78, 14-Inch Shipping. Walter L. Wolf, 1/24/78, 12-Inch Finishing-Bars.

Wesley L. Bradley, 1/24/78, 14-Inch Finishing.

**Bradley G. Kruse**, 1/25/78, Wire Mill Shipping.

**DuWayne K. Doane**, 1/25/78, 20-24-Inch Shipping & Finishing.

John A. Fry, 1/25/78, Wire Mill Shipping.

Ray A. Pope, 1/25/78, Nail Galvanizer. Robert A. Abell, 1/25/78, 14-Inch Finishing.

Vernon A. Ellis, II, 1/25/78, Wire Mill Drawing.

**Ronald J. Terrock**, 1/26/78, 12-Inch Finishing-Bars.

Alan W. Royer, 1/29/78, Wire Mill Drawing.

Gary L. Gray, 1/29/78, 12-Inch Finishing-Bars.

James L. Shover, 1/29/78, Wire Galvanizer.

Steven J. Denning, 1/29/78, Drawing Room Straight & Cut.

Lyle P. Freas, 1/30/78, Trucks.

Jose M. Herrera, 1/31/78, 20-24-Inch Shipping & Finishing.

Newell A. Cook, 1/31/78, 24-Inch Mill. 5 Years

William L. Doering, Jr., 1/6/83, Wire Mill Drawing.

Mark J. Spangler, 1/13/83, Electric Furnace.



Vella Simpson, Steel Division Steno-Correspondent, displays a cake given to her denoting 25 years of service with the Company.



Contributing to the 24 hour shipping record at the 14-Inch Mill were D. Burgess, E. O'Neal, O. Cummings, J. Jernigan, J. Ryan, A. Magana, D. Kested, and R. Galvan.



Members of the 14-Inch Mill Shipping Department that contributed to a 24 hour shipping record were (front row): R. Castle, E. McKenna, E. Last, K. Anderson, (back row) K. Helms, J. Zineifel, F. Taft, J. Snyder, H. Wilkinson, W. Wyatt, and G. Heather.



Contributing to a recent 14-Inch Mill Shipping Department 24 hour shipping record were: (left to right) C. Erikson, M. Kramer, R. Garza, M. Francis, J. Jernigan, J. Ryan, A. Magana, C. Jones and J. Garcia.

## Northwestern Records

## 14-Inch Mill Shipping Record Set

Members of the 14-Inch Mill Shipping Department established a 24 hour shipping record December 4.

A total of 2,504 tons was shipped, which surpassed the 2,128 tons shipped February 27, 1981.

Congratulations to all the employees who contributed to this record performance.

#### **Production Record Set**

A monthly production record was established at the 14-Inch Mill for the month of December, 1987.

A total of 35,448.0 tons was produced in December to surpass the old record of 33,619.9 tons produced in May, 1986.

Congratulations to all employees who contributed to this record performance.





Michael Lubbs (left), an electrician at the West Plant Rewind Shop, receives a certificate signifying completion of a home study course on Instrumentation and Process Control. Presenting the Certificate is Jim Patterson.



Tom Galanis, Vice President Operations - Steel Division (far right), and Gerry Hartman, Superintendent of the 24-Inch Mill (far left), present framed copies of the photo shown at the right to Ray Joslin and Steve Rosenow, Scarfers at the 24-Inch Mill. The photograph appears in the 1987 Annual Report and in Northwestern's Corporate Capabilities brochure. The photo is one of many taken during a photography session for production of several new brochures and was chosen for its human interest. Congratulations to both Ray and Steve on their celebrity status.

### Transformer Failure

(continued from page 1)

At the time the east transformer failed for the second time, a spare transformer had been placed into service just 22 days before - meaning that the Company came within 22 days of a complete power failure which would have totally closed the furnace department and the three rolling mills.

While the cause of the rash of transformer failures is believed to have occurred at the 138,000 volt coils in the transformer, the exact cause has yet to be determined.

"We requested Commonwealth Edison in 1981 to install a spare in the substation," Charlie Bosco, Chief Electrical Engineer, said. "We were turned down. Again in 1986 a request was made to leave the smaller capacity transformer in the substation. Again Commonwealth Edison refused."

Bosco said engineers from Westinghouse, maker of the transformers, will be able to more accurately determine the cause of the failure. The failed west transformer will be back from repairs March 18. The failed east transformer is ready to be moved out of the substation,

waiting for special railway end trucks to arrive. It is expected that this transformer will be returned by mid summer.

The magnitude of the capacity output of the transformers made it extremely difficult to replace, Bosco said. Northwestern's two main transformers are the only two in existence today of this large capacity with a dual voltage output.

The two large transformers are powered by two 345,000 volt systems -one system receives power from the Quad Cities two nuclear units - the other system, called the Nelson line, receives power from Byron's two nuclear units.

The electrical substation located at the corner of Avenue K and Wallace Street was the world's largest capacity industrial substation in 1972, according to Commonwealth Edison. It is still believed to be the largest in the world.

The transformer failure comes almost a year to date from another disaster when an overhead crane fell to the floor of the Company's 24-Inch Mill.

## 1988 Social Security Tax Facts For Employees

The Social Security tax rate for 1988 increases from 7.15% to 7.51% for contributions made by both the employer and the employee.

To determine how much you will pay for Social Security and Medicare in 1988, multiply 7.51% times your estimated earnings.

For example for a worker with weekly earnings of \$400 a week, the weekly Social Security deduction would be \$30.04 (\$1,562.08 yearly). For weekly earnings of \$600, the weekly deduction would be \$45.06 (\$2,343.12 yearly). The maximum amount of earnings for which Social Security can be taxed is \$45,000 in 1988.

The Social Security tax rate has risen from 6.7% in 1983 to the 7.51% figure for 1988. The rate will remain at 7.51% for just two years - in 1990 it goes to 7.65%.

The average monthly benefits paid to recipients eligible to collect Social Security will be as follows for 1988: All retired workers - \$513; Aged couple, both receiving benefits - \$876; Widowed mother, two children - \$1,077; Disabled worker, spouse, children - \$919; All disabled workers - \$508.



Leona Richards (right), Manager of Communications Services, recently celebrated her 25th anniversary with the Company. Handing Leona her 25 year service award pin is David Oberbillig, Vice President of Sales - Wire Products Division.

1987 was a banner year for Northwestern nails. The Company shipped a record 80,313.6 tons of nails during the calendar year, the most ever.

While the 68,193.2 tons shipped in 1986 represented a very good year for Northwestern nail sales, the 1987 figure represented a phenomenal effort by Company salesmen and production and shipping crews.

"There was a great deal of cooperation with other departments that went into play in 1987," Don Nehrkorn, Manager of the Nail Department said. "The Galvanizing, Wire Drawing Room, Cleaning House, and Shipping Departments all contributed to the record. It takes that kind of coordination to just about double shipping figures in a matter of three years."

#### What's New At Northwestern

#### 24-Inch Mill Walking Beam Furnace

The excavation for the furnace basement is finished and workmen are presently installing the steel reinforcing.

Over 300 yards of concrete will be poured in the footing slab alone.

The basement walls will soon be formed and the piers for the equipment will be constructed.

The furnace structure will begin arriving in May and the auxiliary equipment foundations will be constructed also.

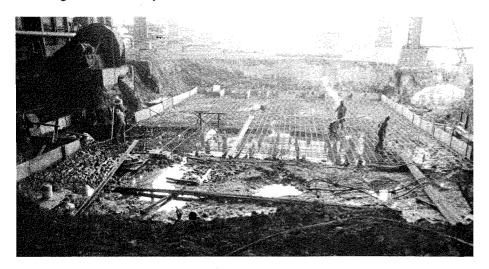
Electrical, mechanical and computer checkout will continue in May and June with expected startup in July.

#### Caster Projects

The continuous caster billet machine will be down for three weeks starting April 3rd for removal and replacement of the spray chamber and installing new support aprons.

Additional machinery will be refurbished for casting the 9¾" x 6" section on the billet machine.

The continuous caster machine will be down for one week starting June 1st for installing new machinery to cast the 16" x 12" x 3-7/8" beam blank.



Excavation for the 24-Inch Walking Beam Furnace has been completed. Workmen are shown here installing the steel reinforcing. Some 300 yards of concrete will be poured in the footing slab alone. It is expected that the furnace will begin operation in July.

The Company went from a previous high of 65,495.5 shipped tons of nails in 1978 to a dismal 24,037.6 tons during the 1982 industry-wide doldrums. Since that time, however, Northwestern has made remarkable improvement.

Nehrkorn said there is still room for improvement. "We haven't hit our full capacity. I can see 90,000 to 100,000 tons of nails being shipped from here."

Indeed, the 1987 record soon may be just a memory. For fiscal 1988 (through December 31, 1987) the Company is some 1,700 tons ahead of last year's record pace.

"A lot depends on the weather," Nehrkorn said. "The last couple of years we've had mild winters. That allows us more shipping days. The winter months last year were very good for us."

Another significant reason for the spiraling shipments of Northwestern nails is the aggressive posture taken by the Company's Wire Products Sales Department.

According to **David Oberbillig**, Vice President of Sales - Wire Products Division, nail sales from new customers have come about as part of the overall sales effort by the sales staff.

"We have been steadily increasing our customer base - adding new nail customers continually," Oberbillig said. "We have also become more competitive with imports - including Canadian nails - long a thorn in our side."



Betty Henson, Northwestern Steel Division Sales Correspondent, stands before a spread of food celebrating her retirement from the Company. Betty, who completed 21 years with the Company, has moved to Florida with her husband Jack.