

A Look Inside



Christmas
Fund
Benefits
are held.
See page 5.



Employees
participate
in Corporate
Olympics.
See page 6.

The Owners Manual

A PUBLICATION FOR EMPLOYEE/OWNERS AND RETIREES OF NORTHWESTERN STEEL AND WIRE COMPANY August 1992

Kohlberg & Co. partnership finalized

Northwestern Steel and Wire Company and Kohlberg & Co. jointly announced on August 12, 1992, that KNSW Acquisition Company, L.P., an affiliate of Kohlberg & Co., had acquired a majority interest in Northwestern Steel and Wire Company. Kohlberg & Co. is a New York-based merchant banking concern.

As part of a recapitalization of Northwestern, KNSW purchased newly issued shares, representing about 52% of the common stock of the Company for approximately \$35 million. Northwestern's Employee Stock Ownership Plan will continue to own common stock in the Company, representing approximately 25% of the



Northwestern CEO Robert N. Gurnitz addresses shareholders during the special meeting on August 10, when the Kohlberg transaction was approved by more than the two-thirds vote required.

Company's outstanding stock. The balance of the equity will be held or purchased by management and other investors. Proceeds of the equity sale will be used to reduce debt under Northwestern's revolving credit line.

As part of the recapitalization, Northwestern and the United Steelworkers of America agreed to a new collective bargaining agreement to August 1, 1996. Further, reflecting Northwestern's improved capital structure, the Company's existing senior lender group has agreed to amend its credit agreement to provide for reduced amortization requirements and other modifications.

Robert N. Gurnitz, President and Chief Executive Officer of Northwestern Steel and Wire Company, said, "This is an outstand-

ing transaction for Northwestern Steel and Wire Company and its employee-owners and other investors. We are very pleased to be associated with a highly respected investment group with a long-term perspective. Our Company's capital structure will be substantially improved by the reduction of debt."

"Moreover, our new collective bargaining agreement, coupled with a variety of other measures we have taken at Northwestern, will greatly enhance our position as a low-cost quality producer," he said. "We are extremely well-positioned to continue to grow and to capitalize on the momentum we have in the marketplace."

James K. Olson, Chairman of the Company's ESOP Administrative Committee, commented, "We welcome Kohlberg & Co. as a partner. This transaction increases the potential for growth in the value of the stock owned by the employees."

Kim G. Davis of Kohlberg & Co. said, "We are very pleased with our investment in Northwestern. The Company has great potential. Our decision to invest in the Company was based significantly on its employee efforts which have enabled it to perform well despite exceptionally difficult conditions in the steel industry. We believe the prospects for Northwestern and its employee-owners and other investors are excellent."

Improvements underway in 'heart' of Houston mill

The 48-Inch Mill in Houston is continuing to make major improvements to the systems vital for operation of the mill. In early July, during a nine-day downtime, employees completed extensive repairs to the U3 stand, the bridge guide, the hot, cold and crop saws, the U1 stand, and the reheat furnace.

In the U3 stand, which is the "heart" of the mill where the bar reverses direction, the vertical liners were replaced. These liners hold the vertical rolls in place so they cannot move sideways. An outside contractor was also brought in to pour liquid steel between the housing and the vertical liners to fill the gaps where the housing had worn down and bring the stand back to original specifications.

Another major improvement was the replacement of the bridge
(continued on page 5)

The President's Corner

Robert N. Gurnitz, President & Chief Executive Officer

Following is the brief message delivered by Robert N. Gurnitz at the recent special meeting of shareholders at which the Kohlberg transaction was approved by more than the required two-thirds majority.

We at Northwestern have today completed the difficult process of recapitalization, which gives us a new opportunity...one that will permit us to not just survive, but to prosper.

This was accomplished during one of the deepest steel recessions in our country - a recession that some steel companies did not survive. The opportunity we have received can be wasted, lost, or it can be realized...it is our choice.

We cannot rest on our laurels. Northwestern's competition is tough! They will always be there. But we must set our sights at being the best. Not just as good as, say, Nucor, Chaparral, Keystone, and Bethlehem, but better. To accomplish this, we must believe in ourselves and have the confidence necessary to reach this goal. There are those in our business and perhaps even some among us who do not believe we can accomplish this, because

they believe that the hourly and salaried workforce of a traditional unionized mill cannot compete with a non-union minimill.

We at Northwestern do not fear those detractors. We were making steel before they came into existence and we will outlast them. We can see the ruins of USX South Works - and we can see our mills still operating. We can see Northwestern's excellent safety record, with a 10% improvement in lost time cases over the past fiscal year, while some minimills have been criticized for disregarding the safety of their workers.

We have the experience and ability to be better than our competition. We have the facilities to do the job. We now must have the vision to know that we can accomplish it and believe in the ability of all to contribute to the success of our Company.

A stagnant or shrinking company cannot survive...so we must grow and each employee must grow...in confidence and ability...which in turn will make our business, our income and security grow.

As Chief Executive Officer, I accept the vision of being best in the industry. I reject the words "It won't work", or "It can't be done."

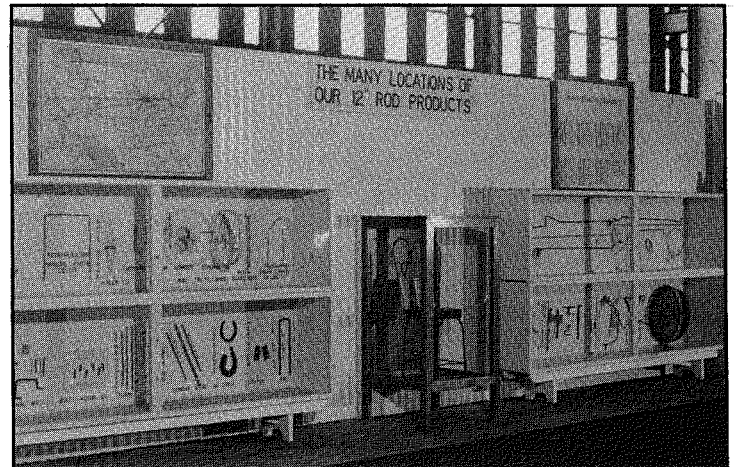
We at Northwestern have always met a challenge and we will do it again. We will enjoy increased job and family security, and enjoy telling our detractors that we once again met the challenge!

New 12-Inch Mill exhibit displays many uses for NSW rod

Until about three months ago, most employees in the 12-Inch Mill would have been surprised to learn that our customers use Northwestern rod to make tricycle wheels and horseshoes. Now the employees can see these products as well as several others displayed in the 12-Inch Mill finishing area. The display also includes a map of North America showing all the destinations for Northwestern rod and a list of about 150 rod customers and the tonnages they purchase from NSW.

Noel Gillette, Manager of the 12-Inch Mill, thought it would be a good idea to display the products made from Northwestern rod in the mill so those employees could see the end result of their work. "If you imagine the rod in the 12-Inch Mill as an actual product you see and use at home, you take a little more pride in your job," Noel said.

Putting the display together took help from several people at Northwestern. The Carpenter Shop has built six display cases to



The display at the 12-Inch Mill shows some finished products made by our customers from rod produced by Northwestern. The display holds the many products collected. Four are being used now, and two have been set aside for future use. Ed Matthews, Product Manager of the Rod and Wire Division, has worked with the customers to learn of all the products made from NSW rod as well as get the samples to display.

Lin Proeger, Metallurgist, Carl Huffman, 12-Inch Finishing, and many more 12-Inch Mill employees all had a part in getting the display ready for viewing.

Noel says the employees in the 12-Inch Mill were very surprised at the number of different products made from the rod and the distance Northwestern ships rod to its many customers.

A few other products in the 12-Inch Mill Display include a cheese slicer, a gate hinge, oven and grill parts, car parts, lawn mower parts, assorted hardware made by National Mfg. in Sterling, and a chair made in Centralia.

Children's Christmas Fund Can Drive

Anyone wishing to donate aluminum cans for the NSW Needy Children's Christmas Fund can do so by taking their cans to Vock Distributing, 409 Avenue L, in Sterling. Once the cans have been weighed you should advise the clerk that the money is to be donated to Northwestern's Needy Children's Christmas Fund.

One man's story

Yes, there can be life after alcohol

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) celebrated its second anniversary earlier this summer. The numbers prove that the EAP has been a much needed addition at Northwestern. Jim Gallentine, Manager of EAP, says that more than 400 employees and family members of employees have sought assistance from the EAP during its first two years of existence. Although the EAP assists employees with a wide range of problems, the *Owners Manual* talked with one NSW employee who went to the EAP for a problem many others share in common. The following is his story, told in his own words.

"I was recommended to the EAP by the Union Hall after I got fired from work. I had been drinking for 27 years and doing drugs for 23; I was a 'professional.' It just kept getting worse and worse. Then I started doing it at work and it was interfering.

"The Union Hall recommended that I go see Jim Gallentine. They didn't tell me that I had a problem, but they just told me I should talk to someone.

"I came to the EAP for selfish reasons; I came here to get my job back. I was going to do whatever it took to get my job back. I only planned to stay clean until I got my job back.

"That day I was at the Union Hall at 8:00 and I came over to see Jim at 9:00. By 3:00 that afternoon he had me on my way to the treatment center.

"I was in the treatment center for a 21-day program. I got home from the center at about 2:30 and my first AA meeting was at 3:30 the same day, so I started meetings right away.

"At that time, I still didn't think I had a problem. I was just a 'weekend warrior.' I'd only drink three or four every day, and then on my weekends I'd go off on a good one.

"The first three or four months I was off work were real hectic because that's when the bills started coming in. My wife said to me, 'This is your problem; you take care of it.' She was working and supporting us. That was the only income we had so she made me combat my problem head on. I did get upset over financial problems, but we made it through.

"While I was off work for six months, I didn't have anything else to do, so I'd go to a meeting every day — sometimes two or three a day. I probably ended up going to 90 or 100 meetings before it really hit me.

"It took me awhile to realize it. It didn't just pop into my head — not in treatment or right away at the meetings. I was still going to the meetings just for the job, but after awhile I didn't care about the job. It's not an overnight cure. It takes time, and it takes a lot of work and dedication.

"At first I was working minute by minute and hour by hour to not take that first drink. You see, the first drink is still my biggest problem, and so far I've been combating the problem because I haven't had my first one yet.

"I get jealous of a person after they've had two or three. They're in a good mood and they're high-spirited. But then that same person has six or eight. They're repetitive, they get loud, they get boisterous. They make me glad I'm not that way.

"The EAP gets that monkey off your back. I had a \$2,800 a year habit and now I'm able to get along with my co-workers and family.

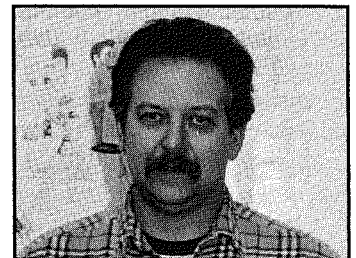
"My family life has greatly improved. I finally found out that I've got kids I can talk to. They're intelligent kids. I never knew this. I



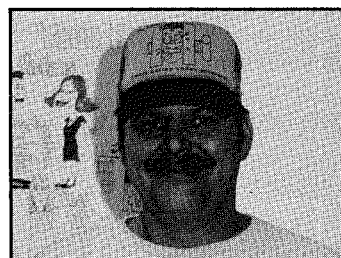
missed so many sporting events, graduations, dance recitals. Now it's just fantastic. We get along real good now.

"I would give the credit to a lot of people for helping me realize I had a problem: Jim Gallentine, the EAP, the treatment center, myself and my family because they kept making me go. The more you go, the more it sinks in — just like your first grade teacher. The first time she told you the ABC's, it didn't click, but maybe the twentieth or the fiftieth time or maybe even the hundredth time you heard the ABC's, you got it. It's the same with the AA meetings. It's repetition. Anybody that doesn't give it a chance, doesn't grasp it."

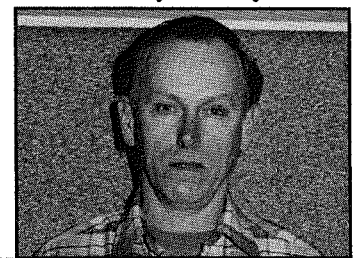
New EAP Contact Persons



Gene Jacoby
Safety/Security



Gary Campbell
Plant 2 Cranes



Bob Walsh
Plant 1 Pollution

Northwestern employees celebrate anniversaries

The following employees will be celebrating anniversary benchmarks with Northwestern in September and October. Congratulations on your years of service!

SEPTEMBER

40 Years

Narciso Puentes, 9/3/52, Electric Furnace.
LaVerne R. Thompson, 9/30/52, Rock Falls Labor Pool.

35 Years

Marilyn L. Lowder, 9/3/57, Accounting.

30 Years

John S. Gonzalez, 9/2/62, Plant 2 Crane Mechanics.

David B. Hoover, 9/2/62, Nails.
Clifford R. Golden, 9/6/62, Billet Caster.
Herman J. Rodriguez, 9/17/62, Plant 2 Crane Mechanics.

Charles E. Bennett, 9/19/62, QIP Facilitator.

Ronald L. Davis, 9/24/62, Data Processing.

James R. Naylor, 9/24/62, 20-24" Shipping.

Robert H. Benson, 9/26/62, Audit & Compliance.

Thomas D. McFadden, 9/29/62, Clerical.

25 Years

John Wright Huber, Jr., 9/1/67, Sales-Wire Division.

James L. Meyer, 9/3/67, Nails.

Gerald R. Patten, 9/5/67, Nails.

Charles J. O'Brien, 9/15/67, Laboratory.

Russell L. Thompson, 9/23/67, Rock Falls Shipping.

George Canales, Jr., 9/26/67, Brickmasons.

Lyle A. Roberts, 9/26/67, 12-Inch Mill.

20 Years

Louis J. DeMay, Jr., 9/5/72, Plant 2 Machine Shop.

William C. Eberly, 9/5/72, Plant 2 Machine Shop.

Robert L. Hinrichs, 9/5/72, Rock Falls Inspection & Salvage.

Allan E. Millerschoen, 9/5/72, 14-Inch Shipping.

Dennis M. Fritz, 9/8/72, Medical.

John J. Echebarria, 9/19/72, 1 & 5# Packaging.

10 Years

Robert D. Bopes, 9/3/82, Wire Mill Shipping.

Patrick N. DeMay, 9/5/82, 20-24" Shipping & Finishing.

Cary D. Robbins, 9/16/82, Nails.

Robert J. Wise, 9/22/82, 20-24" Shipping & Finishing.

Kim V. Nguyen, 9/26/82, Roll Thread.

5 Years

Alfred J. Daniel, 9/1/87, Sales-Wire Division.

David E. Long, 9/1/87, Environmental Engineer.

OCTOBER

30 Years

Gerald L. Hartman, 10/8/62, Manager-24" Mill.

25 Years

Walter W. Denning, 10/6/67, Plant 5 Millwrights.

Richard W. Zinke, 10/6/67, Trial Crew West.

Frank Martinez, 10/28/67, Plant 5 Crane Mechanics.

20 Years

Rudy L. Edge, 10/2/72, Rock Falls Production.

Bernard J. Higley, 10/2/72, Rock Falls Shipping.

Larry G. Criss, 10/5/72, 12-Inch Mill.

Keith E. Boyer, 10/15/72, Wire Mill Millwrights.

Douglas H. Brotheridge, 10/15/72, 12-Inch Mill.

Irwin P. Farrington, 10/15/72, Plant 2 Electrical.

Lawrence H. Hohn, Jr., 10/15/72, Mobile Mechanics.

Gerald W. Marweg, 10/15/72, 14" Finishing.

Floyd J. Matera, 10/15/72, 20-24" Shipping & Finishing.

Dean E. Munz, 10/15/72, Plant 3 Crane Mechanics.

Ramirio Sandoval, 10/15/72, Plant 3 Inspection.

Loren R. Steder, 10/15/72, 12-Inch Mill.

Thomas A. Cornwell, 10/16/72, Plant 5 Millwrights.

Thomas F. Gallardo, 10/16/72, Plant 2

Electrical.

Ramon S. Guerrero, 10/16/72, Furnace Cranes.

Arthur L. Johnson, 10/16/72, Plant 2 Electrical.

Dennis C. Lewis, 10/16/72, Wire Mill Inspection.

Michael L. McKenna, 10/16/72, Wire Mill Machine Shop.

Harrel W. Miller, Jr., 10/16/72, Wire Mill Shipping.

Ventura L. Morales, 10/16/72, Cleaning & Coating.

Thomas R. Staples, Sr., 10/16/72, Wire Mill Shipping.

David R. Ballard, 10/17/72, 24-Inch Mill.

William G. Bruns, 10/17/72, 12-Inch Finishing-Bars.

Pascual Garcia, Jr., 10/18/72, General.

Randall L. Wolber, 10/22/72, 12-Inch Mill.

Gary R. Campbell, 10/24/72, Furnace Cranes.

Clayton H. Carlson, 10/24/72, Stores.

Terrance A. Henson, 10/24/72, Nails.

Allan K. Randall, 10/28/72, 14-Inch Mill.

10 Years

Charles F. Parker, Jr., 10/20/82, General.

Ernesto G. Contreras, 10/25/82, 20-24-Inch Shipping & Finishing.

USWA Local 63 forms Civil Rights Committee

USWA Local 63 announced in July that a Civil Rights Committee has been formed to investigate members' complaints of civil rights violations. If a Local 63 member feels that he or she is being harassed or discriminated against because of race, religion, sex or a disability, he/she should contact one of the Civil Rights Committee members at the Union Hall.

The following Local 63 members have been appointed to the Civil Rights Committee: Tony Ortiz, Chairman; Grady Daniels; Nazir Qureshi; Timothy Sheley; & Laura Thompson.

In 2nd raffle and Annual Vendor's Softball Game

Over \$2,000 raised this summer for Children's Christmas Fund

The drawing for winners in the second raffle held this year for the Needy Children's Christmas Fund was held on July 13th.

The first prize in the raffle was a 35" Toshiba TV from Knie Appliance & TV and was won by Larry Retherford of the 24" Mill. Second prize of a \$100 Shopping Spree at Eagles was won by Ken Mueller of Xtek, one of Northwestern's vendors, while the \$50 Gift Certificate for Restaurant of Choice went to Orlo Spotts of Sterling, Illinois.

The names of the winners were drawn by NSW employees Kathy Willman, Purchasing; Ron Erickson, Plant 2 Electrical; and Bob McDonald, 14" Mill.

In addition to the \$1,622.90 raised by the raffle, another \$446.00 was realized from the Annual Vendor/NSW Employees Base-

ball Game held in July. The vendors won the game 12 to 11, with the proceeds going to the Needy Children's Christmas Fund.

This year's organizers of the fund are Beth Lancaster, Executive Secretary-West Plant; Karen Galbreath, Secretary-QIP; and Lavinne Morgan, wife of Don Morgan (Engineering).

One more raffle is planned yet this year, and it is hoped that all fund raisers will be completed by the end of October. Volunteers are still needed to help with numerous tasks and any employee or spouse of an employee interested in donating his or her time to help with fund raising, shopping for gifts for the children, etc. are urged to call Beth at 625-2500, ext. 2475, or Karen at ext. 2511.



Bob McDonald, 14" Mill, draws the name for the first prize in the recent Needy Children's Christmas Fund raffle. The lucky winner of the 35" Toshiba TV was Larry Retherford of the 24" Mill.

Eight announce retirement in July and August

Seven NSW employees retired effective July 1, while one more joined them in retirement on August 1, with a combined total of 245 years of service to Northwestern. Congratulations to the following people, Northwestern's newest retirees!

July

37 Years

Ernest Clapper, 1 & 5# Packaging.

Curtis Rude, Electric Furnace.

33 Years

Rafael Hernandez, Electric Furnace.

32 Years

John Stevens, Plant 2 Mechanics.

30 Years

Walter M. Long, Galvanizer.

Dale Reed, 24-Inch Mill Electrician.

20 Years

David Gray, Wire Mill Shipping.

August

26 Years

Taylor McGinnis, 24-Inch Mill.

Houston (continued)

(continued from page 1)

guide, which is between the U3 stand and the E3 stand (edger). These two stands or "mills" are 15 feet apart, and the bridge guide's purpose is to guide the bar from one mill to the next as smoothly as possible. The old bridge guide was bent and only weighed five tons. The new bridge guide is much more sturdy, weighing 25 tons, to handle the large bars which the 48-Inch Mill rolls.

Chuck O'Connell, Mechanical Engineer, says the new bridge guide gives them much more control of the rolling of a bar. "Now, we're able to set the bridge guide opening at a different spacing for every bar we roll. We can adjust the width and height, which is especially important for the head and tail of the bar where there is less support," he explained.

The reheat furnace received a thorough cleaning as well as further modifications during this last downturn also. The roof was re-insulated and even replaced in the "soak zone."

The hot saw, cold saw, and crop saw were all worked on during the downturn. The saw arbor, which is the shaft on which the blade spins, was replaced in the cold saw. The bearing journals were redone in both the cold saw and the crop saw. In addition, the crop saw rollers were replaced. The rollers allow the crop saw to travel perpendicular to the roll line.

In the hot saw, additional computer aid was implemented, eliminating the need for one of the operators in the pulpit. Now only one person is needed to run the hot saw and keep track of the bars coming through and the lengths they should be cut.

At the UI stand, which is equivalent to the first three stands at Sterling's 24-Inch Mill, the "rack gears" were refurbished. These gears cause the manipulator to move left and right. The manipulator has two parts on each side of the roll line, and it adjusts to put the bar into the groove where it should be rolled through the entire mill. Work was done to the rack gears because the two parts of the manipulator were not on the same plane. An unparallel manipulator can cause the bar to roll slightly crooked through the mill.

Chuck says that everything worked on during the latest downturn has done an excellent job in the rollings since. "The three biggest factors to which I would attribute our yield increase are the modifications to the furnace, the replacement of the vertical liners and the new bridge guide," he noted.

Corporate Olympics!

Northwestern successfully defends 40-over crown

Area employees of local industries gathered at Sterling High School in July to "re-live" their high school track and field years and compete against rival corporations. This event, the Corporate Olympics, was a huge success that ended with another victory for NSW.

The points were even closer, but Northwestern held onto its title and once again brought home the first place trophy for the 40-and-over age division. Although the 30-39 age division had an outstanding day, they fell just ten points shy of the first place finishers, National, to capture the second place trophy.

Northwestern had another good turnout this year with about 60 "athletes" and "cheerleaders." The charity event organized by the United Way went smoothly with a record number of participants and an exciting kick-off which included four parachutists descending from the sky to land in the middle of Roscoe Eades Field. (The parachuting exhibition was organized by Wahl Clipper who won the spirit award for their efforts.)

Northwestern earned points for finishers in first through eighth place, and those participants are listed at the right:



Northwestern employees were visible in the gold and black lettered T-shirts as they competed for the Company in the Fifth Annual Corporate Olympics held at Sterling's Roscoe Eades Field in July. NSW successfully defended its 40-over crown and took second in the 30-39 division.

The Owners Manual

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Story ideas, comments and suggestions are appreciated and may be sent through inter-office mail to:
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50m Dash	29-and-Under Tim Stickel 2nd Wes Anderson 6th Lori Anderson 2nd Maureen McKenna 6th	400m Dash	Sonny Russell 2nd Rose Hernandez 5th Albert Benson 1st Albert Benson, Ross 2nd
100m Dash	Lori Anderson 2nd Maureen McKenna 5th	4x100 Relay	Albert Benson, Ross 1st Sonny Russell 1st Rhonda Banes, Deb 1st Cushman, Chris 1st Edmondson, Karen 1st Freres 3rd
400m Dash	Dale Haberer 8th	Mile Medley Relay	Chris Edmondson, Karen Freres, Sonny Russell, Dave Hernandez 1st Chris Edmondson 2nd Mike Sanders 3rd Dan Deets 6th
4x100 Relay	Wes Anderson, Jim Hall, Tim Stickel, Shawn Wharff 2nd Joe Judd 4th Luis Silva 7th	5K Run	
5K Run	Shawn Wharff 1st Tim Stickel 2nd Lori Anderson 3rd	Mile Team Run	Dave Hernandez, Chris Edmondson, Mike Sanders 1st Dan Deets, Mike Fortney, Karen Freres 4th
Long Jump			
Obstacle Course	Shawn Wharff 1st		
	30-39		
50m Dash	Jeff Hager 1st Ross Ferger 3rd Rose Hernandez 5th Deb Cushman 7th		
100m Dash	Jeff Hager 1st		

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Departmental and mill records fall

Production records aren't lasting for long in many departments at Northwestern! The following employees and departments have done a great job in the past two months. Congratulations!

Drawing Room - 6 ga. Plat. Wire
15,320 lbs. - 5/27/92 (3-11)

Paul Brunk

Old Record - 14,410 - 1/11/91

Drawing Room - .277 Plat. Wire
31,980 lbs. - 6/1/92 (7-3)

Paul Brunk

Old Record - 30,120 - 1/15/91

Field Fence - 47-6-C
75 rolls - 6/10/92 (7-3)

Ray Wolf

Old Record - 72 - 6/6/90

Drawing Room - .306 Plat. Wire
34,800 lbs. - 6/29/92 (7-3)

Paul Brunk

Old Record - 29,910 - 11/27/91

48" Mill - SHIPPING
26,073 tons - June 1992

24" Semi-Finish - SHIPPING
48,657 tons - June 1992

Old Record - 47,007 - 10/91

Drawing Room - .177 Plat. Wire
15,950 lbs. - 7/15/92 (7-3)

Paul Brunk

Old Record - 15,600 - 11/29/90

Field Fence - 47-6-B
72 rolls - 7/17/92 (7-3)

Ray Wolf

Old Record - 71 - 7/14/91

Drawing Room - .034 Wire For Galv. Netting
10,380 lbs. - 7/28/92 (7-3)

F. Sandoval

Old Record - 10,360 - 10/12/90

48" Mill
28,415 tons - July 1992

Old Record - 27,754 - 5/92

48" Mill - SHIPPING
26,307 tons - July, 1992

Drawing Room - .277 Plat. Wire
34,080 lbs. - 8/3/92 (3-11)

Paul Brunk

Drawing Room - .177 O/S Wire
18,260 lbs. - 8/3/92 (3-11)

Paul Brunk

ANSWERS communication system serves NSW customers

In an effort to provide better service and improve customer relations, Northwestern has developed a Customer Communication System. The system is called ANSWERS (Automated Northwestern Steel and Wire Electronic Response System). It furnishes customers with information such as available inventory and current rolling dates simply by dialing an 800 toll-free number into Northwestern's mainframe through their computers.

ANSWERS is an on-line, real-time communications system available to customers 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The system was designed to keep up with the competitive demands in the steel industry to give the best possible service to the customer.

A Steel Division customer who wishes to be on-line with the system needs only to notify NSW's Sales Department and have a modem hooked up to their computers to dial into NSW's computer system. If the customer needs the communication software, Northwestern provides that as well.

Once a customer is on-line and has dialed into NSW's system, he must key in a series of user ID's and passwords so that the information he receives will pertain only to his company. This protects both the customer and Northwestern. Larry See, Manager of Information Services, says the security of ANSWERS is near "hacker-proof."

Other information available to the customer through ANSWERS is the status of purchase orders (including whether the order has been shipped), a summary of material scheduled to be shipped and the tracing

of railcars shipped from Houston.

The screens also give detailed information, such as the available inventory and the next roll week date. In addition, the customers can send messages to their inside sales correspondent on a "message" screen and they can receive updated information about Northwestern on the "NS&W News" screen.

One element of the system which puts it ahead of other similar programs in the steel industry is the real time factor, which means that information is updated continuously. At least one competitor of Northwestern has a similar system, but only downloads the information once a day. With Northwestern's continuously updated system, the customers can see the information as quickly as the inside sales personnel.

According to Ray Bauer, Manager of General Sales, the ANSWERS system has had a strong start. "The response by the customers so far has been excellent. The first customers to go on-line have been a great help to us because they've given us suggestions on how to improve the system. Since they are the users, they are the best source of feedback as to how helpful the system is," Ray commented.

Larry See gives a great deal of credit for the success of ANSWERS to Northwestern's systems programmer, Mike Fritz. "Mike has been a tremendous help on this project. A great deal of technical expertise is required to exchange information with the many different computers in use by our customers. He has helped to make it very 'user-friendly' for the customers who some-

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Answers (continued)

(continued from page 7)
times may not be comfortable using the computer," Larry said.

ANSWERS should be a great help to the Sales Department, as well as the customers, because it will make both parties more productive and efficient. In June, when less than 15 customers were completely on-line with the system, more than 100 calls were made into ANSWERS.

A good number of these calls into ANSWERS more than likely saved phone calls to the inside sales personnel besides saving time for the customer. Ray explained, "It's going to be a big time saver and cut down on the number of calls for some of the 'run-of-the-mill' type questions such as, 'Did my shipment go out?' and 'Do you have any stock in 8-inch channel?'"

While some customers can get on-line right away because they already are properly equipped, others take more time due to their computer system set-up. This accounts for the fact that while about 40 customers are in various stages of getting into the system, only about 15 are currently completely on-line.

Ray hopes to see 100 or more accounts in various stages of getting on-line by the end of August. As more accounts are added in the future, modems and telephone lines will be added by Northwestern to handle the number of calls coming into the system.

"We should try to accommodate as many customers as we can because it's going to draw those people closer to Northwestern Steel and we're going to be able to service those customers better. Hopefully, they'll buy more steel as a result," said Ray.

Larry and Ray are already starting to make plans for expanding this type of service to the customers in the future. Some customers have suggested that a setup to send an automated fax or printout of a number of screens would add convenience. The rolling schedules and stock list are several screens long and this can take some time to print one screen at a time. Although Northwestern doesn't have the fax dial-in capability at this time, Larry says he would like to see it accompany the ANSWERS system.

"It's going to take a combination of both things before we can really satisfy all of the

customers most of the time," Larry said.

While ANSWERS is designed for only Steel Division customers right now, the Sales

Department would like to see a form of the system available to Wire Division and Rod & Wire customers in the future.

Olympics (continued)

(continued from page 6)

Obstacle Course	Dale Haberer Albert Benson	2nd 3rd	Long Jump	Vazquez, Nancy Anderson	1st 1st
				Ron Hughes Mike Mason	1st 3rd
				Nancy Anderson Freda Last	3rd 6th
50m Dash	40-and-Over John Tomczak Mike Lubbs Connie Helms Val Gassman	1st 3rd 2nd 8th	Obstacle Course	Ron Hughes Mary Stegmiller	6th 6th
100m Dash	Mike Lubbs Ron Hughes Connie Helms	2nd 6th 3rd	Tennis Softball	Non-Age Events Barry Jacobs	2nd
400m Dash	Rich Steder	1st	Throw	Shawn Wharff Jeff Hager	2nd 4th
4x100 Relay	Dennis Anderson, Mike Lubbs, Mike Mason, John Tomczak Nancy Anderson, Val Gassman, Connie Helms, Mary Stegmiller	1st 2nd	Target Golf	Colleen Stauffer Jim Treacy Dave Oberbillig Vella Simpson Mary Stegmiller	8th 3rd 8th 2nd 7th
Mile Medley Relay	Connie Helms, Nancy Anderson, Dennis Anderson, Mike Fortney	1st 2nd 6th	Wheelbarrow Race	Ross Ferger & Karen Freres	2nd
5K Run	Pablo Vazquez Mike Fortney	2nd 6th	Volleyball	Richard Mocklin, Mary Mocklin, Debbie Nelson, Jared Zinke, Tim Stickel, Wes Anderson, Steve Grimes, Lori Carbaugh	2nd
Mile Team Run	Rich Steder, Pablo				

Northwestern Steel and Wire Company
121 Wallace Street
Sterling, Illinois 61081

Bulk Rate
U.S. postage
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