

# NEWSLETTER

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Joe Penne, Editor

## TRAINING WITH T.V. USED IN CHATTANOOGA

A televised course in the techniques of modern supervision is underway at the Chattanooga plant for 16 of the company's foremen.

The course content presents the role of the supervisor as a part of the management team of the organization and covers some of the specific functions and responsibilities of supervisory personnel in today's business scene.

The program is produced by Applied Management Science, sponsored by the Tennessee Manufacturers Association, and viewed over WTCI-TV in Chattanooga.

To prepare for each of the 10 weekly telecasts, the participants are assigned readings in their course manual. Each Wednesday they view a 30-minute telecast lecture by course instructor Dr. Jack F. Rhode, then discuss the lecture and the related readings, applying them to their jobs as supervisors. This is followed by a personal "audit" designed to stimulate individual thinking.

Jack N. Malone, quality control supervisor, serves as discussion leader for the participants who have years of experience in different departments of the office and plant.

## RETIREE SUGGESTS TO LOOK BEYOND "THE JOB"

Some of the things many of us take for granted during our working days turn out to be of prime importance when we reach retirement.

The opportunity for personal relationships established at work, the chance to be productive and, yes, financial considerations such as company benefits are often overlooked as we go about our day-to-day jobs. That they ultimately become very important is confirmed in a letter written to President John F. Thurston by Mrs. Lone H. Mulkey, who recently retired after working more than 20 years in the Chattanooga office.

Dear Mr. Thurston:

"As an employee of Mueller Co., Chattanooga operation, who retired March 19, I would certainly feel remiss if I failed to express my thoughts and feelings to you regarding retirees of Mueller Co. (of which I am now one).

"I just want you to know that we, as employees, do not fully realize until it is time to leave, just what blessings we receive from Mueller Co., the Garden Spot

of the Earth. It gives a most gratifying sense of security to know that when we retire we have hospitalization insurance for life, a substantial life insurance policy to take with us; also the monthly pension that accompanies this. And all this has not cost the employee one penny. There just could not be a company anywhere that offers this security to its retirees.

"I do thank Mueller Co. from the bottom of my heart not only for these benefits, but for the 20 years and 10 months of happy employment I was privileged to enjoy with the company at above average salary. These things are just not found many places, if any! This I know, for I was employed 17 years before coming to Mueller Co. and life insurance, hospitalization insurance and retirement payments came out of my payroll check. So you see--I really know.

"Mr. Thurston, please accept my most sincere thanks to Mueller Co.--My employment with the company and my association with the fine people in it has been a happy, rewarding, and a very important part of my life that I shall never forget."

Most sincerely,  
Lone Mulkey

## BREA PLANT PROPERTY USED FOR RECREATION

Mueller Co. recently made about three acres of land northwest of the Brea plant available for recreational uses for the City of Brea.

The company has no immediate need for the property and leased it on a dollar-a-year rental basis to the city for such non-profit recreational organizations as Little League Baseball. The agreement is renewable automatically from year-to-year, but may be terminated on 60 days' notice by either party on or after Dec. 31 of this year.

According to the agreement installations may include lights, playfields, fences, bleachers and other facilities, all of which will, of course, have to be removed and the property restored to its original condition when the agreement is terminated.

Mueller Plant Manager Lloyd W. Darnell, Mayor Ed Jackson, City Councilman John Haddox, Assistant City Manager Buford Nichols, and Recreation Director J. Tony Baca, officiated at informal ceremonies in connection with the transfer agreement entered into April 1.



## HOW FAR IS 513 MILES BY TRAILER-TRUCK?

(Editor's Note: a number of weeks ago when Mueller Co. began leasing an over-the-road tractor and trailer, principally for service between Chattanooga and Decatur, someone suggested that company people who had to visit one plant or the other on business could ride the truck and save on travel expenses. Your editor accepted this suggestion and made a ONE WAY trip to Chattanooga. Here's a first-hand account.)

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Remember when your impatient, pre-school kids asked during the family trip: "When are we going to get there" or "how far is 20 miles"?

In your first ride in a 70,000-pound-plus tractor-trailer combination you revert to these same questions in almost child-like eagerness. Instead of a father's typical reply of "pretty soon" and "not far", driver Bob Kresin says that Chattanooga is 513 miles away and that our schedule puts us in Chattanooga the next morning.

After an hour or so of riding and the sun has set on the Sunday evening, you are sure that Chattanooga is a lot farther away than you anticipated and you want to ask, "How far, really, is 513 miles?"

To Bob, Chattanooga is just another long night's work away. He spends about four nights of the week making the two weekly round-trips between the Mueller plants, hauling brass and small iron castings south, and bringing back customer products, boxes, chips or raw materials. Instead of truck-on-train piggyback service that took as many as five or six days to make the delivery, we now have overnight service between the facilities.

"It rides like a truck," is a phrase we often use to describe rough travel in a vehicle, but there is nothing else that really "rides like a truck" when it comes to vibrating, jostling and bouncing. The steam engines you rode as a young brakeman in Iowa were smoother. The locomotive was cold in the winter, hot in the summer and always dirty and noisy. Our new tractor is air conditioned, clean, equipped with a stereo tape system--but bumpy.

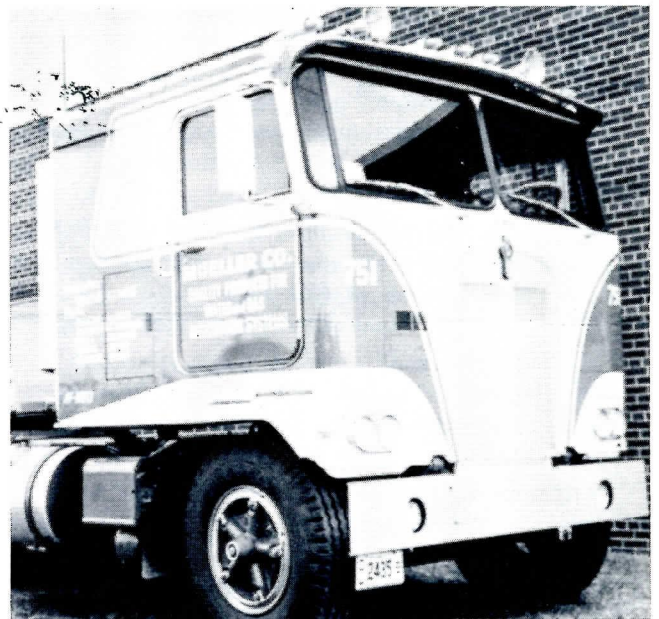
It doesn't take you long to gain a new respect for the demands and skills needed to be a long lines driver. There is no relaxing when that vehicle is moving. Eyes on the road, the instrument panel and the tachometer. Hands on the wheel or shifting stick as he goes through the range of 13 gears. Mind on what he must do and thinking about what the other driver might do.

Bob is obviously proud of the skills he possesses and "wouldn't be happy doing anything else", even though it keeps him away from his young son and wife for long periods. He hasn't really done much else except farm work as a youth and a little tinkering as a mechanic.

At 31, Bob has been driving trucks about a dozen years, starting with smaller equipment and then moving

up to the big rigs in 1965. He has a million miles in his log book, including cross-country runs, and loads of livestock, chemicals, perishable fruits and grain.

He runs about 100,000 miles a year and has never had a serious accident. His secret to safe driving: "I try hard to avoid those situations," he says with a little smile. Hardly a secret, Bob, but the record speaks for itself.



With interesting conversation, linked with adjustments in the body and the excitement of the new adventure, time passes quickly and it is time for the first break. Sunday evening in Robinson, Illinois, doesn't offer much choice in restaurants but Bob knows a spot that is convenient but certain to be ignored by Duncan Hines.

Bob warns that this is strictly a "coffee stop", but there will be an eating break beyond Evansville where we take on 49.5 gallons of diesel fuel to refill the 120-gallon tank.

Our midnight snack is taken at a truck stop like those pictured in our mind. Trucks from all over the nation parked at random with their engines rumbling at their idle speed, a brightly lit fueling area and even special rest room and shower facilities marked for "Truckers Only." Here the driver is king and the choice window tables are "Reserved for Truckers." Bob recommends the food here, then recounts some experiences he has had eating at various places around the country--many of which he cannot endorse.

A bowl-of-vegetable-soup-and-a-ham-sandwich later, we renew the trip through Kentucky and try to talk some more. But, a 290 horsepower diesel engine laboring between you and the driver makes it difficult.

We talk about the ailments that go with truck driving to limit the number of years most men are physically able to do the job. Irregular hours, interrupted sleep, poor meals and the continuous pounding and bouncing lead to back ailments, kidney problems and ulcers, all of which take a heavy toll of drivers. Poor auto drivers



lead to ulcers for more over-the-road drivers than anything else, Bob reminds.

Health, accident and retirement benefits provided by Bob's membership in the Teamster's Union come up in the conversation and then it swings to family life.

By this time your throat is raw from making yourself heard over the drone of the engine and other parts of your body are sore from the bouncing. At Bob's suggestion you kick off your shoes and climb into the sleeper located behind the seats. It is padded and roomy, but can you get used to sleeping in a chest? (You hesitate to compare it to sleeping in a coffin.) It bounces too, but it is a relief. At least the vibrations are shifted to different parts of your body. You rest a little and drop off to sleep as the silver exhaust stack just outside the cab near your head hums a discordant tune that can hardly be called a lullaby.

You suddenly rouse up as a thought crosses your mind: "How many of those 42,000 pounds of brass castings in the trailer would fit into this sleeping compartment if we had a very sudden stop?" An interesting question but it doesn't do much to make you sleep even when you know that the front end of the trailer is equipped with a heavy steel protective bulkhead. Until you climbed into the "couch" you were almost unaware of the 40-foot trailer and its load behind you. The "picture windows" in front and the definite separation behind made the cab a world all its own.

With thoughts of sharing the compartment with tons of brass castings, it took only one call from Bob to get you back into the "shotgun" seat, to prepare for a break at a truck stop near the Tennessee line.

This lot too was full of trucks with their big diesels idling, but the cafe was almost empty. Bob explained that most of the drivers were probably locked inside the trucks taking naps. Don't most people sleep at 3 a.m.?

A snack and then you spend the next two hours riding and anticipating breakfast. The highway belongs to you and a few other trucks. The small Tennessee towns are dark, but you wonder how many people are roused from sleep by the noise of the engine shifting into a lower gear.

Now for breakfast of pancakes and country ham "on top of the hill." Daylight starts to peek around the Tennessee hills as you start a long descent toward Chattanooga, the portion Bob promises to be "the toughest part of the ride". You are conscious now of the pushing effect of the 20-ton load going down the long grade that is clouded from time to time by patches of early morning fog.

The many signs advertising "Ruby Falls" and Look-out Mountain that had been hidden by darkness now become visible with the breaking day. Pretty soon the Tennessee River and "The Mountain" come into sight along with an expressway filled with workers heading for early morning jobs. This sight tells Bob his night's work is nearing its end.

A cross-town ride and then the welcome sight of the

Mueller water tower. Bob skillfully maneuvers and backs the big loaded trailer into the crowded rough castings yard and checks in with Foreman Don Broyles. From there he goes to the traffic office and talks to Traffic Manager Jim Rox about the next load. He learns that his return to Decatur will take somewhat longer than the just completed run because he has hydrants and valves for customers in Granite City, Washington, Illinois and Bettendorf, Iowa.

The rough castings are unloaded, the truck moved to the shipping dock and the re-loading begins. As the fork lift trucks move hydrants and valves onto the trailer, Bob "sleeps" in the cab, getting his rest in anticipation of the long night that lies ahead.

Early evening and he is back on the road--alone. His "passenger" is looking forward to a quiet dinner and a stationary bed.

Bob is driver, bookkeeper, sometimes-mechanic and customer service representative for Mueller Co. although he is not a Mueller employee. He is also father and husband--when his schedule permits.

We often look at someone else's job and think it looks easier than our own. Some prefer driving a truck, but this passenger sums up a trip to Chattanooga with the words of many ex-servicemen, "It was a great experience, but I wouldn't want to do it again."

## **INDUCTION FURNACE TRAINING UNDERWAY**

A program designed by Advance Achievement Systems, Inc., for training of personnel in the processing of iron and utilization of the induction furnace is now underway for 11 men working in the Decatur Foundry.

The specially-designed course employs a technique of audio and visual instruction daily for a 30 to 60 minute period over 18 to 24 weeks. Our in-plant program is conducted by Foundry Engineer Jack Parsons, guided by a complete outline, aids and a manual provided by the consulting firm.

The Mueller men, both salaried and hourly, are foundry supervisors, maintenance personnel and others whose duties relate to foundry work. Subject matter ranges from basic electrical theory and metallurgy to induction furnace operating principles and troubleshooting.

The program is being undertaken to prepare Mueller foundrymen for the installation of two electric coreless induction melting furnaces in the Decatur Iron Foundry this summer.

According to Advance Achievement the training and consulting program has been carefully designed to train anyone, regardless of his background, in the successful operation of the induction furnace system. "It is grounded in practical experience and founded in the indisputable laws of science. Its content is theoretically sound, but goes far beyond theory into the practical world of application and successful furnace use," according to the firm.



## News Briefs

It has been said that some people buy record albums because of the pictures on the covers. A former Beatle and his wife caused quite a stir with their attire (or lack thereof). Another featured a female dressed in whipped cream and some use wild, far-out artwork. For the Mueller employee conscious of the aesthetic we must recommend the country and western album cover for "White Lightin'". It features a beautiful Mueller fire hydrant, dominating a country scene. We haven't heard the music but the cover is pure art!

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Being able to talk to groups about products and the industries we serve is one of the skills our salesmen develop as they sell. Two recently exercised their speaking skills as they met with groups within their sales districts. Frank L. Kuenstler, sales representative in northeast Texas, recently talked about "The Economic Importance of the Water Utilities in the U.S." at the Texas Water Utilities Short School, Texas A & M University, College Station, Texas. Kenny Potts, who travels part of southern California, addressed a class of water operator students at Santa Ana College. The staff instructor in water utility science at the school wrote Kenny and said, "The members of the class were impressed with your enthusiasm and knowledge of the subject." The talk concerned water service fittings--a product line close to Kenny's heart!

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A fire in the Moldmaster foundry complex in Chattanooga interrupted operations in the foundry from the afternoon of March 29 to the morning of March 31. Hot metal falling onto a sand conveyor belt caused the fire. The resulting heat melted the insulation off some wiring protected by conduit. The belt was replaced in a short time, but it took around-the-clock work by the Maintenance Department to restore the electrical system by Wednesday. Five pieces of fire equipment from the City of Chattanooga answered the alarm and one onlooker said, "I can see the headlines in tomorrow's paper, 'Fire Hydrants Burned Up At Mueller Co.'"

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Kennes Karnes (Dept. 70) and his wife recently celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary with an open house in their home in Oakley.

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Derle B. Smith, Decatur Shipping Room, recently was elected to a four-year term as trustee for the Village of Bethany.

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Jack Parsons, Foundry engineer at Plant 4, recently participated in an educational lecture series in Chicago sponsored by the Chicago Chapter of the American Foundrymen's Society. Parsons and the manager of the Foundry Division, Metals Engineering Department at

Deere & Company, Moline, discussed "Sand and Metal Effect on Finishing Costs." Parsons is currently a director of the Central Illinois Chapter of A.F.S. and has participated in sand and quality control workshops for the organization on the national and regional levels.

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About 15 office workers in Chattanooga are enrolled in a short-course on comptometer operation. The comptometer is used for calculations in the Payroll and Accounting departments, and several women in other departments expressed an interest in learning to operate the office machine. Mrs. Wanda Weller, a staff member of a Chattanooga business machine firm, is teaching the six, one-hour classes after work.

### FAMILIAR FACES IN NEW PLACES

Lynn D. Edwards, formerly a project engineer, has been promoted to chief products engineer, succeeding John J. Smith, deceased.

George H. Kopp, formerly Foundry Division methods engineer, has been transferred to the position of assistant Brass Foundry foreman, Decatur.

## Retirements

The following list gives the retiree's job at time of retirement, years of service and date of retirement.

### Chattanooga

**Dan A. Dunn**, clerical inspector, 7 years, 11 months and 28 days, March 31, (Disability).

### Mueller, Limited

**Ernest A. Berdan**, tester, 19 years, 6 months and 16 days, April 27.

### SOMETHING ABOUT OUR RETIREES

Mr. and Mrs. Rupert Henry recently celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. Mr. Henry was a lathe operator in Dept. 80 at the time of his retirement. He had almost 25 years with the company and retired in December of 1961.

About 50 men attended the April meeting of retirees at the House of Plenty. Glen Hazen was back from Arizona for a visit and Fred Tratzik, now living in Florida, was back for a short time. Harold Taylor returned for the summer after wintering in Florida. All three were at the April meeting. The May meeting will be on the 13th at 11:30 a.m.

The Mueller retired women in Decatur continue to meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 12:30 p.m. in the Elks Club. All retired ladies are invited to the luncheon meeting. About 20 regularly attend.