

# NEWSLETTER

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Don Bathe, Coordinator

## MUELLER TO CHANGE NEW PLANT SITE

In August, Mueller Co. announced plans to locate a new plant in Athens, Alabama. The site for the facility will be changed, however, following a recent announcement that General Motors will build a large plant near Athens, a town of about 14,000.

"The Mueller Co. will continue its plans to build a new plant and alternate sites in the Northern Alabama area are being investigated," according to Harlan A. White, Mueller Co. president.

He said, "News accounts of the projected labor needs of the General Motors plant, plus growing demands for workers for other new plants coming to the area, indicate it could be difficult for the communities to meet the manpower needs of our new plant."

Work force projections for the GM plant in the Athens area have ranged from several hundred, initially, to several thousand over the long range.

Mueller Co.'s plans call for the construction of a \$13 million manufacturing plant with 245,000 square feet of space with the capability of producing fire hydrants, gate valves and other products similar to those made at the company's Chattanooga, Tennessee plant. Total expected employment, when the plant was fully operational, was estimated to be around 350. Most of these manpower needs had been expected to be filled by workers in the Athens, Decatur and Huntsville area.

"Naturally, the need for a new plant is just as pressing today as it was a few months ago and we plan to find a suitable location which allows us to pursue our original goals," White added.

Some of the preliminary engineering work had been done on the Athens project, but ground had not been broken. Frank C. Hackman, plant project manager, and W.R. Davis, plant engineer for the project, have moved to the Athens area, and they are working now on finding a new location.

## CHANGES MADE ON PUBLICATIONS

Joseph C. Penne, company editor during most of his 13 years with Mueller Co., joined Caterpillar Tractor Co. in Decatur on Dec. 1, as editor and public affairs representative.

The duties of editing and public relations for the company will be assumed by others in the company.

Publication of the **Mueller Record** will be handled by the Sales Division through the company's advertising agency and the Advertising Department. Don Bathe, who has been in the Decatur Plant Engineering office for 10 years and at Mueller Co. for 23 years, will be responsible for producing the employee NEWSLETTER and news releases. He will retain some of his previous duties and will have the title of Supervisor of Property Records and Employee Newsletter Publication.



Harlan A. White  
William R. Murphy  
Robert Mallon  
Charles W. Moore  
George M. White  
Lyle R. Huff  
Earl Bright  
Walter R. Lopez  
L. M. Bostes  
Lloyd H. Darnell

## FUEL SHORTAGES BLOW IN ON WINTER WINDS

The story has been told about the plant engineer in Chattanooga 35 years ago who kept a broken thermometer in his desk drawer. Whenever someone complained about the temperature in the building, he'd pull out the thermometer which couldn't move off 74 degrees and suggest the surroundings were comfortable.

The power of suggestion is forceful, but against the strengths of a national energy shortage and reduced supplies of fuel, it will take understanding, patience and an extra sweater to see operations at Mueller Co. through the winter months with a minimum of disruption and discomfort.

In Decatur for example, Illinois Power Co. warned Mueller several months ago that we could expect our natural gas supply to be interrupted for almost six months during the heating season. When the pollution-free heating system was installed in 1970, a standby system of fuel oil was provided, but no one dreamed of the gas shortages being experienced today or thought of relying on fuel oil through the winter.

Late this summer the company installed five new oil tanks with a total capacity of 95,000 gallons, but this quantity can only heat Plant 1 and the office for a few days. In an effort to conserve fuel as much as possible, temperatures have been lowered in all areas to the point where some may be uncomfortable.

Such moves are being experienced by employees all over the country--including some measures more drastic than those at Mueller Co.

Many firms will be faced with the decision to reduce temperatures further or reduce operations. When a choice is made to temporarily cutback, the obligations of a firm to its employees, customers and owners are serious considerations.

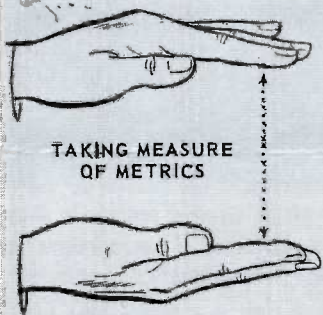
When headlines talk of "rationing, stockpiling and allocations" the commitments a company has to those depending on it must be weighed. When a central Illinois farmer learns he may not get fuel to dry his corn, while down the road a manufacturer is trying to put aside a winter's supply, it becomes difficult for the individual to understand and to weigh objectively. The farmer is concerned with his immediate problem and thinks "the big guy" gets the break.

The large firm may seem to get preferential treatment, but it has obligations of great proportions. Hundreds of employees and probably thousands of employees' family members are depending on that firm for work and income. Commitments have been made to customers and the company must honor these, if at all possible. The rights of owners of a firm must be respected and these obligations to many to keep operating are always considered.

A company must do everything within its power to

maintain operations today, but during the next few years the availability of adequate energy must be included in all discussions of operations, expansions or improvements.

John A. Love, the nation's chief energy advisor told Congress that the United States can expect some kind of fuel rationing for as long as five years to come. "But demand is going to be made to fit supply in one way or another, and I expect we're going to have government intrusion in this... for the next three to five years," Love said.



“Taking Measure of Metrics” will be a regular feature of the NEWSLETTER as it becomes more apparent that the metric system of measurements will be a part of U.S. standards sometime in the future. This feature will try to keep you apprised of activity in this area and provide an awareness for the use of millimeters, kilometers and grams.)

**TAKING MEASURE OF METRICS**

**A GRAM OF PREVENTION**  
*Proverbs, catch phrases, nursery rhymes might undergo wholesale revision when U.S. adopts the metric system.*

**Examples:**

- “A miss is as good as 1.6 kilometers.”
- “28.4 grams of prevention is worth 453.6 grams of cure.”
- “He’s all wool and .9 meters wide.”
- “Give him 2.5 centimeters and he’ll take 1.6 kilometers.”
- “I wouldn’t touch him with a 3-meter pole.”
- “Don’t hide your light under a 35-liter basket.”
- “The Texan was wearing a 38-liter hat.”
- “There was a crooked man, and he went a crooked 1.6 kilometers.”

## Retirements

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

### Decatur

**Mildred M. Johnson**, core cleaner and inspector in Dept. 50, 31 years, 2 months and 22 days, Dec. 31. (80 Plan)

**Clifford L. Carter**, core room utility man in Dept. 50, 33 years, 9 months and 8 days. Dec. 31 (80 Plan)

**Cecil W. Wilson**, machine operator in Dept. 80, 35 years, 3 months and 6 days, Dec. 31 (80 Plan)

**Willie D. McCoy**, machine operator in Dept. 80, 27 years, 2 months and 7 days, Dec. 31 (80 Plan)

**Richard G. Armstrong**, machine operator in Dept. 80 24 years, 3 months and 6 days, Dec. 31. (80 Plan)

**Elmer H. Fawley**, manager of quality control, 38 years and 15 days, Dec. 31. (80 Plan)

### Chattanooga

**Bennie L. Dortch**, Iron Foundry, 19 years, 10 months and 24 days, Nov. 30. (Disability Plan)

## TAP WATER MENACED BY THREE SHORTAGES

"THE SAFETY and adequacy of public water supplies will be in jeopardy unless water is assigned priority in areas where shortages are occurring," says Dr. George E. Symons, President of the American Water Works Association. "Water utilities are not only being harrassed by chlorine shortages," he said, "but threatened increased shortages of fuel and electric power. Chlorine is essential for water safety. Power and fuel can't be rationed for water either. They are needed for pumping."

The association which Dr. Symons heads speaks for more than 30,000 community water suppliers in North America.

"The chlorine industry has asserted it won't let water suppliers down," Dr. Symons said. "But only someone in the federal government can set priorities. The chlorine industry can't without being accused of collusion and other illegalities. Right now they are selling chlorine that water suppliers need, to industry which is a more profitable market, and to whom they are tied by contracts."

## Service Awards

The following Mueller employees received service awards during November.

### Decatur

10 Years: Robert P. Burlington

20 Years: Maurice L. Sefton, George H. Kopp

### Chattanooga

30 Years: Billings L. Jones

## GAS HEATING HITS RECORD

Despite regional shortages of natural gas, demand for residential gas heating continues to increase nationally. An American Gas Association survey reports that despite localized curtailments of supply and moratoriums on new gas connections, more than one million new household heating customers were recorded during 1972. The increase topped the million mark for the first time since 1968.

The year-end total of housing units using gas heating reached an all-time high of 38,568,000, up by 3.6% over 1971.

## GREETINGS TO MEN IN MILITARY SERVICE

As the Holiday Season approaches we want the men in military service to know we haven't forgotten them, and wish to extend to them a "Merry Christmas" from all their friends at Mueller Co.

## Some Time Ago

## At MUELLER

According to the **Decatur Review** of June 3, 1897: "The H. Mueller Gun Company has sold the entire stock of sporting goods to Maxwell & Rodgers, dealers in hardware and carriages of Sterling, Ill. The main reason for disposing of the stock was the fact that the business of the H. Mueller Manufacturing Company has been increasing at such a rapid rate in this and foreign countries that H. Mueller thought it wise business policy to get the services of his son, F.B. Mueller, so that he could represent the H. Mueller Manufacturing Company in the eastern states and possibly in foreign countries."

Hieronymus Mueller began business in 1859 in a store room with a small stock of guns and revolvers and gun repairing. In 1872, he expanded into a new building and increased his stock of firearms, in addition to starting in the plumbing, steam and gas fitting business, but it was soon outgrown and four years later another move was necessary. In 1896, this retail business was sold out so the founder and his five sons could devote more of their time to manufacturing.

During the depression period in 1897, the company had 85 employees, equalling or surpassing any other manufacturer in the city. By 1903, a Decatur newspaper claimed the H. Mueller Manufacturing Company was the largest factory in the area, and with its 500 employees it had the reputation of being the largest manufacturer of water and gas brass goods in the world.

## FOREIGN ENGINEERS VISIT IN DECATUR

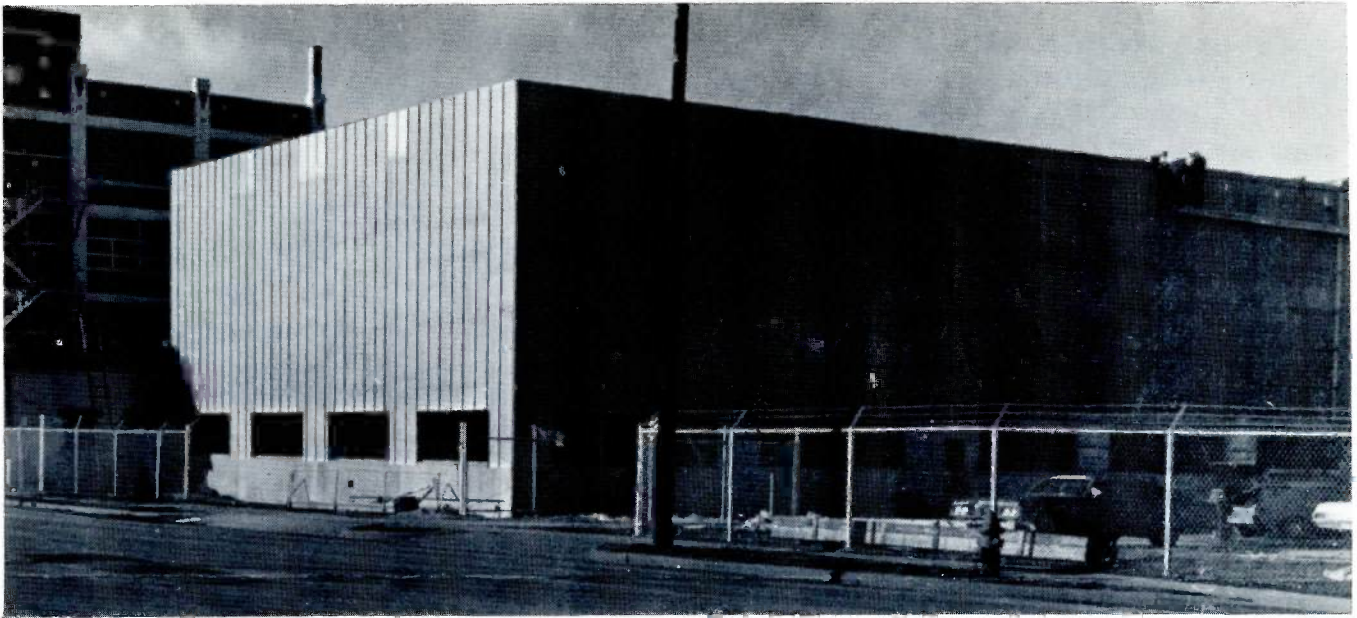
Nine engineers from Venezuela and one from Iran, who are in the United States for a year to study the U.S. natural gas industry, spent three days early in December in Decatur becoming familiar with Mueller gas products and touring our plants.

Those from Venezuela are in this country under the sponsorship of the National Oil Company of Venezuela and all are enrolled in a study program at the Institute of Gas Technology, (IGT) Chicago.

They will examine all facets of natural gas production, distribution and management through classroom work, field trips, and visits to major suppliers of the U.S. industry.

Wayne C. Gracey, a staff member of IGT, accompanied the group. This is the second year-long session he has conducted at IGT for foreign engineers.

Such varied backgrounds as civil, chemical, mechanical and petroleum engineering are found among the visitors, one of whom is a woman.



The current expansion of Plant 4 is rapidly taking shape and the construction work is expected to be finished by the end of January. Beginning last June, the new 70 by 480 addition now has the roof and floor completed. The perforated acoustical wall material is installed and a sound-absorbing insulation between that and the ribbed, protected metal siding on the side walls are 50% completed.

The mezzanine which is being constructed is adding some color. The concrete that is being poured has a red dye added to give it a new look. The mezzanine is the location of the rest room, shower and lunchroom with various offices below.

#### HOUSING STARTS CONTINUE DROP

Housing starts in October plunged 18%, the steepest drop on record. This followed a 8.4% drop in August, followed by another drop of 16% in September, the lowest level in three years.

Housing starts have been on the decline generally since last January. Choked by high interest rates and a lack of mortgage money, housing starts in October fell to an annual rate of 1,613,000 units from the 1,761,000 unit pace in September. Last month's housing starts were at the lowest level since October 1970, when they ran at a 1,580,000 unit rate.

A forecast from Michael Sumichrast, chief economist of the National Association of Home Builders in the **Wall Street Journal**, says that housing starts are likely to fall to a 1.3 million rate by December or January.

#### MUELLER BOWLING TOURNAMENT

A mixed doubles tournament was held at the Eldorado Bowl on November 18, with 108 participants. First place winners were Clara and Gleason Shaffer with 1273 pins. Second place went to Judy Myers and John Puckett with 1256 and third place was won by Linda and Paul Williams with 1237.

High Single Game (Men) was rolled by Gleason Shaffer, with a score of 244 pins. High Single Game (Women) was won by Judy Steele with a score of 208.

High Three Game Series (Men) went to Hal Whitacre with 614 pins and the High Three Game (Women) total was won by Judy Steele with a 571.

#### FAMILIAR FACES IN NEW PLACES

A.D. (Gene) **Hullinger**, manager of industrial engineering, Decatur, has been promoted to the newly-created position of headquarters industrial engineer, reporting to C.W. Moore, vice president-manufacturing. Succeeding Hullinger as manager of industrial engineering is **Rex L. Camfield**, who was formerly an industrial engineer in Decatur. **Leonard L. Landgrebe**, formerly methods and cost estimator, has been promoted to assistant Iron Foundry foreman. **Walter H. Jenkins**, formerly senior industrial engineer, has been promoted to the position of ground key machine division foreman. **Galen W. Jenkins**, formerly ground key foreman, has been assigned to the position of ground key assembly foreman. **Richard L. Ferrill**, formerly Standards engineer, has been assigned to the position of Foundry industrial engineer. All of the Decatur changes were effective December 1.

In Chattanooga, **Walter S. Smigiel, Jr.**, formerly Laboratory assistant, has been promoted to the position of systems/analyst programmer in Data Processing. **Dean Andrews**, assistant Machine Shop foreman has been named Machine Shop foreman to fill the vacancy resulting from the death of William Ben Roy October 30. **Haywood Edwards, Jr.** has been promoted to assistant Machine Shop foreman.

#### RETIREES TO MEET JAN. 10

The January meeting of retirees will be at 11:30 January 10 at the Swartz restaurant.

The December meeting was attended by 57 members including John F. Thurston.