

# PLAIN TALKS

July/August 1992

Volume 71 Number 7

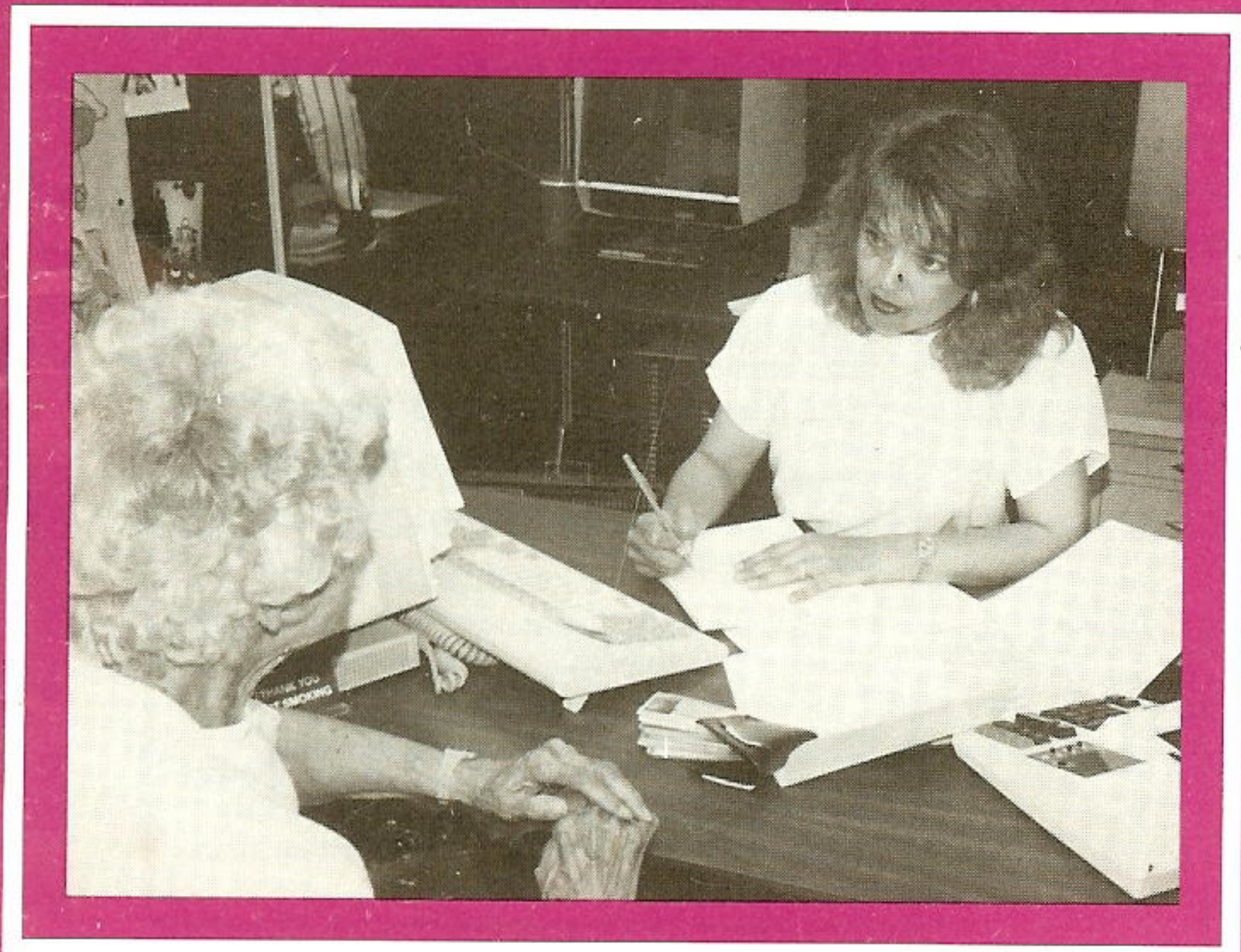
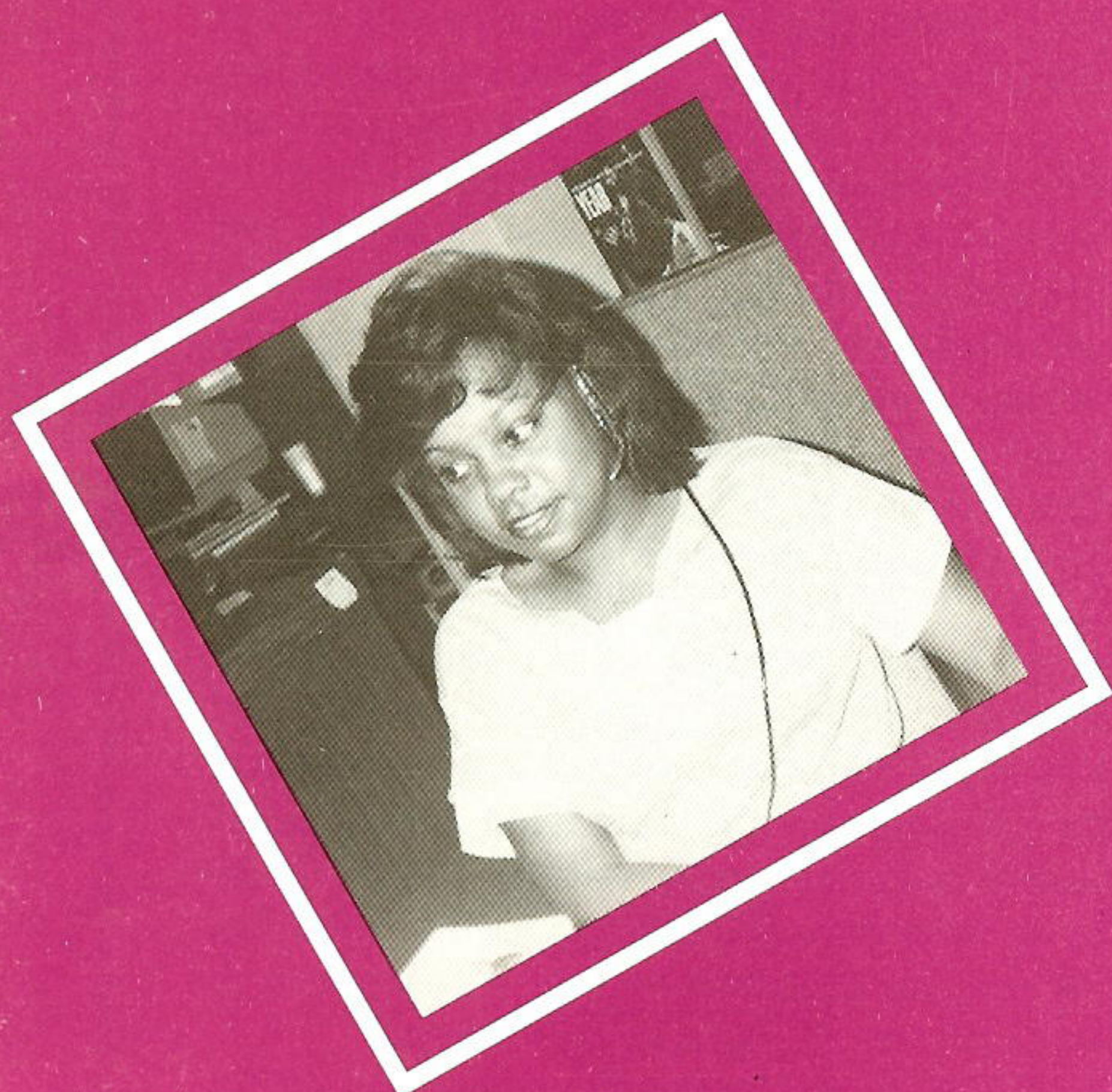
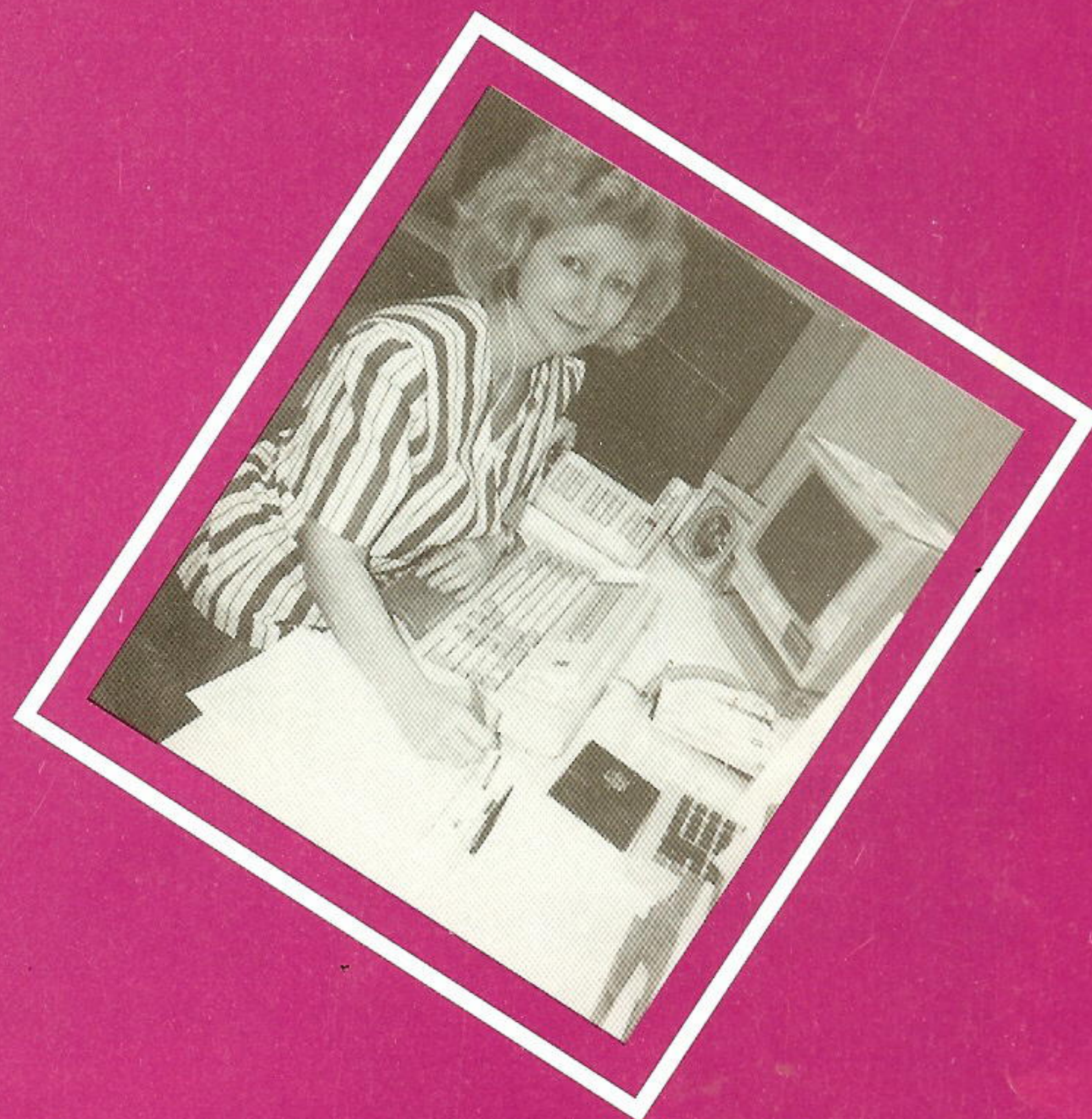
**In this issue:**  
**Miller addresses**  
**employee concerns**

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**Earth Day celebration**  
**in Baton Rouge**

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**Radio enthusiast**  
**hams it up**

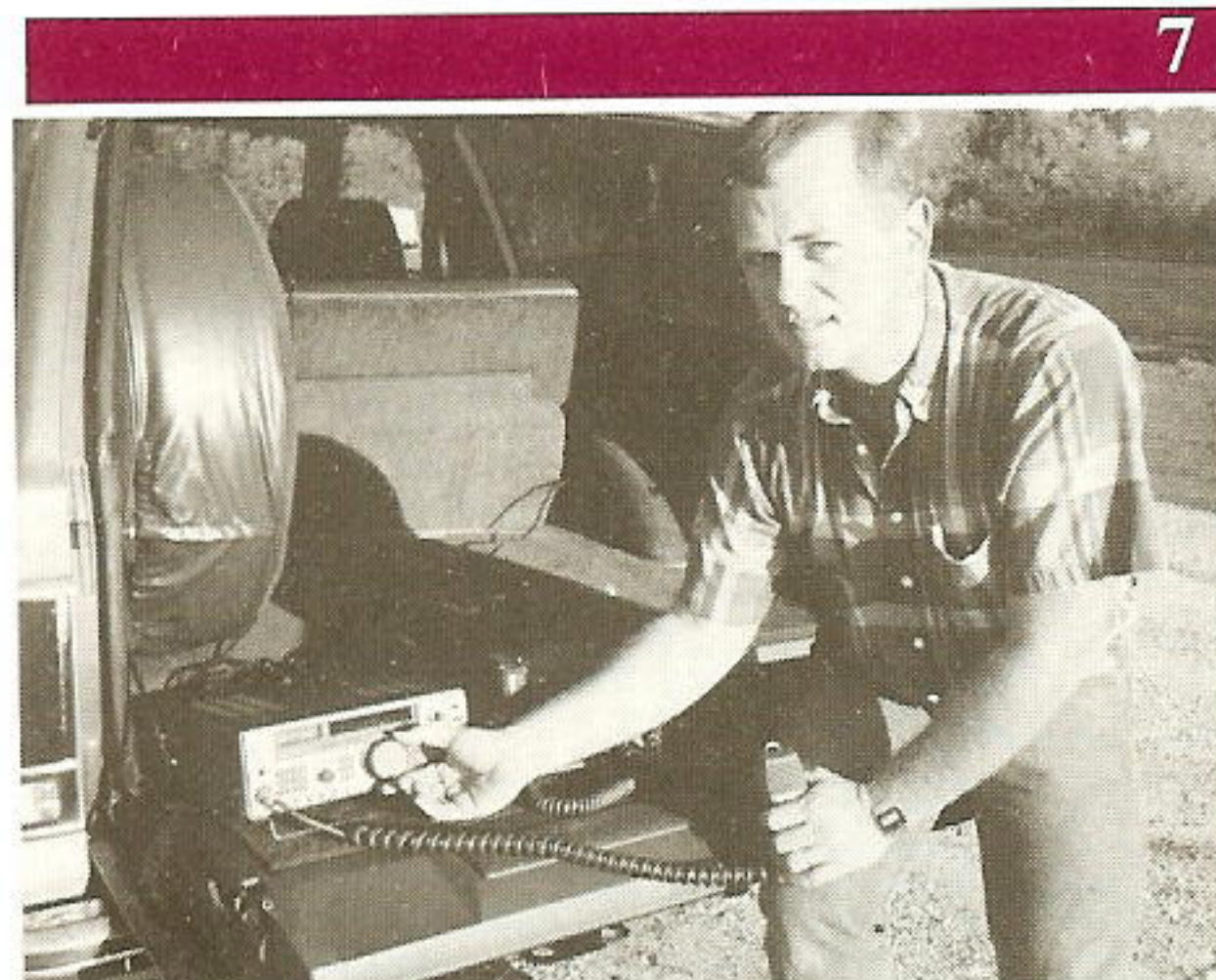


## Serving Our Customers



# PLAIN TALKS

July/August 1992 Volume 71 Number 7



## About the cover

Our team of employees receives high marks from customers. In a recent survey, our employees received a 92 percent favorable rating from those they serve. (See pages 4-6)



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# Jammin' on the boulevard

by Pris Gallagher

Great food, good music and plenty of sunshine proved the right combination for a successful South Louisiana gathering as over 500 people attended the "Jambalaya Jam for Energy Efficiency" at the North Boulevard office April 28.

Residents and workers in downtown Baton Rouge enjoyed free jambalaya and soft drinks while viewing the display, "Plan Before You Plant." GSU foresters displayed different types of trees and recommended planting distances from power lines. They also suggested what type of trees to plant to maximize energy efficiency.

The event, now in its third year, was part of a weeklong Earth Day celebration, featuring a downtown festival Sunday, May 3. Baton Rouge was reported to have the third largest celebration of its kind in the country.

During a brief ceremony, Ken Sandberg, manager of the Baton Rouge Division, presented the first annual Golden Cypress Award to Nancy Roberts, executive director of Friends of the Environment, a nonprofit group supporting science and environmental education. The company plans to give the award annually to an individual whose accomplishments serve as an outstanding example of responsibility to the community and environment.

Representatives from the gas department offered test rides in a mini-van powered by compressed natural gas. A steady stream of customers asked questions and expressed interest in the company's ongoing program to fuel much of the department's fleet with the alternative fuel.

As the afternoon progressed, customers were spotted dancing in the median on the boulevard as a popular duo played favorite hits from the 1960s and 70s.

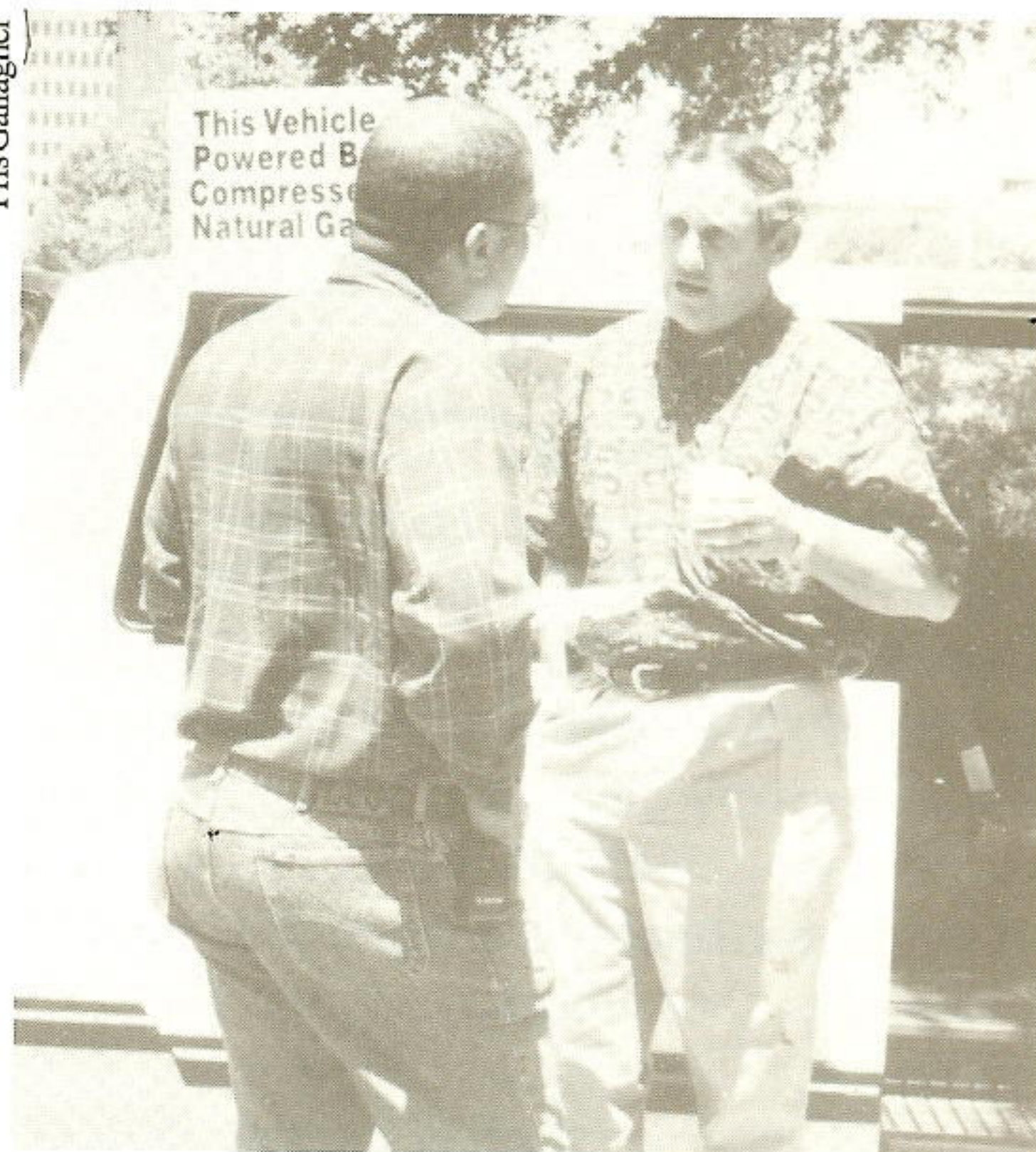
WJBO radio aired live from the office during a three-hour remote broadcast, featuring one-minute commercial messages promoting the event. Flyers had been distributed earlier in the week to surrounding offices inviting employees to visit the display and enjoy an outdoor lunch.

The following Sunday, many of the same employees were back to distribute free cherry bark oak and bald cypress seedlings and provide information to the more than 50,000 people who flocked downtown to celebrate Earth Day.

Bob Baber



Pris Gallagher



*Top, Employees gather to begin serving jambalaya to over 500 people who attended the "Jambalaya Jam for Energy Efficiency." Above, Cart Varnado, GSU Gas Department, discusses compressed natural gas vehicles with a customer during Jambalaya Jam.*



# How do you make a customer happy?

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*Customers are the lifeblood of any business. At GSU, our representatives receive high marks from customers. Five dedicated customer contact people share their keys to successful customer relations.*

---

by  
Mark Viguet

"Hello, this is Gulf States Utilities. How can I help you?"

For many GSU customers, a voice on the phone or a conversation in the office is the first time they interact with the company one-on-one. Customers flood GSU offices systemwide with requests every day, and the important job of satisfying them lies with GSU's customer contact employees. To many customers, these employees **are** the company.

Customer contact personnel field inquiries from people who need to turn on, turn off or transfer electric service, seek a credit extension or ask any number of questions about GSU and their bills. These dedicated employees act as advisers, teachers, mediators and problem-solvers for the people who matter most to our business—customers. Customers are the reason GSU exists; customer contact personnel provide a vital link between customers and the company.

The 1991 Division Operations customer satisfaction survey, compiled by the Market Research group, shows that GSU employees receive extremely high marks from customers. In fact, our representatives received a 92 percent favorable rating from those they serve. How did they do it? We talked to five employees to find out.



Darlene Rutherford

**Peggy Helton, customer contact representative, Conroe**

"I consider my job important because what a customer thinks about me is what they think about GSU," Helton says.

"We handle the difficult cases. Many customers already have problems when they come in the door, so our job involves a lot of problem-solving," Helton says. "First I have to find out what they need and then see if I can accommodate them."

"We have to answer questions not only about bills, but about any type of GSU program or advertisement," Helton says. "I try to handle their requests if at all possible. Customers don't want to wait on someone else—it's important we know the answers."

As for irate customers, Helton says, "I try to listen to what they say, not how they are saying it. At times, we can offer

help customers may not even know about.

"Usually, these people are upset because they can't pay a bill. They're already frustrated. So I listen and see if there is a way I can help," Helton says. "If I'm able to help them, they're going to come back to me—plus they tell their friends."



**Celia Settle, senior customer representative, Beaumont**

Working day-in and day-out with customers, "You definitely have to be a different breed," Settle says with a laugh. "You have to be cut out for it."

"At times, you've got to be hard enough not to have the wool pulled over your eyes, but compassionate enough to understand customers who really have problems," Settle says. "And, you've got to play mind reader sometimes. The customer will know what it is they want, but they won't know how to say it."

Settle cites other important factors in customer relations.

"It's not only the way you treat the customer, but the way you look. You've got to smile and stay positive, you've got to have a willingness to help and you really need to know what you're talking about," Settle says.

As for angry, upset customers, Settle says, "The best tactic to use is to be very quiet—let them vent that frustration and anger by listening to them—and generally they will listen to you when they are finished."

Les Jones



**Carol Hertzock,  
customer contact  
representative,  
Baton Rouge**

Pris Gallagher



"It's a big responsibility. If they hang up the phone unsatisfied, GSU looks bad," Hertzock says, summing up the importance of her job.

"I really like the personal touch of working with a customer. Basically, I've found customers want to call one person and let them do the groundwork, finding out answers and possible solutions," Hertzock says.

"Each day is different and you have to be able to deal with the different personalities of customers," Hertzock says. "You have your good days and bad days, just like any job."

How does she handle the inevitable irate customer, angry over the amount of their bill or some other perceived wrong?

"With an angry customer, the most important thing is that you listen to their problems and let them know you're trying

to help. They have to know you care about what concerns them," Hertzock says. "There's no use having two angry people. I let them know I'm going to try to help them in any way I can."

*"I really like the personal touch of working with a customer...Each day is different and you have to be able to deal with the different personalities of customers."*

**Carol Hertzock**

*"You've got to smile and stay positive, you've got to have a willingness to help and you really need to know what you're talking about."*

**Celia Settle**

*"I consider my job important because what a customer thinks about me is what they think about GSU."*

**Peggy Helton**





Sue Simon

**Gail Hinson, customer contact representative,  
Port Arthur**

"We take our job of serving the public seriously," Hinson says. "I really enjoy working with the customers who will let me help and I try my best to satisfy them."

Hinson says the relationships you can forge with some customers are special ones.

"Our customers will call in and become familiar with one clerk, and they'll always want to speak to them," Hinson says. "Often, I'll talk to elderly people who have no family, and they need someone to talk to. Sometimes you'll hear their whole life history."

"You've never met these people in person, yet you feel like you know them," Hinson says.

Hinson says her job many times involves education. Most customers are open to learn about electricity and GSU, especially when they have a high bill complaint.

"First, I make sure we haven't made a mistake reading their meter. Then I try to help them understand electricity use and suggest they start reading their meter to monitor their usage," Hinson says. "Once they start the readings, they begin to realize they really are using the amount of electricity they are paying for."

---

*"You've never met these people in person, yet you feel like you know them."*

**Gail Hinson**

*"When I can talk to a customer who has a problem and help him, it's very rewarding."*

**Jeanne O'Quinn**

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**Jeanne O'Quinn, customer  
contact representative, Lake Charles**

"This is a very challenging job. As in any job where you deal with customers who have problems, there can be a lot of tension,"

O'Quinn says. "It's very important to do everything you can to help. If I don't make a good impression on the customer, it won't matter who else they talk to. They'll be upset."

"Education can be a big part of my job. I take time to explain to customers how they can conserve electricity and how they can best use it," O'Quinn says. "This usually involves detailing the amount of electricity their appliances use, and explaining how to read their meter so they can monitor their usage. Then they can see the relationship between usage and billing."

Understanding that relationship can sometimes be difficult for customers, O'Quinn says.

"I use the example of going to the store to buy goods. When you go into a store and purchase items, you have to pay for them.

Donna Little



I try to show them that they're using an 'item,' electricity, that they will be charged for," O'Quinn says.

"When I can talk to a customer who has a problem and help him, it's very rewarding," O'Quinn says.



# Boone's a ham on the radio

story by Robert Adams  
photos by Darlene Rutherford

Chris Boone, communications serviceman 1st-class, Conroe, enjoys amateur radio more than just as a hobby. Sure, he enjoys the relaxation he receives from tinkering with electronics. He enjoys experimenting with new projects and sharing knowledge among other radio operators. He also enjoys using his hobby to help someone in need.

Experimenting and helping people in need seem to be common traits among amateur, or "ham," radio operators. "We have a long history of providing emergency communications during disasters when no other communications are available," says Boone.

When Hurricane Alicia hit Houston, the National Weather Service lost contact between its Galveston office and Jefferson County. Boone and other operators used their ham radios to keep the two offices in touch.

Boone came to work at Gulf States in 1984 as a communications serviceman in Conroe. His work is a natural extension of his ham radio experience, which began as he grew up in Groves, Texas.

"I started in ham radio when I was 14, along with some close friends," Boone says. "Some of them now work for GSU, too."

His high school band director helped him get his license. Later, his hobby led to electrical engineering studies at Lamar and jobs at radio stations.

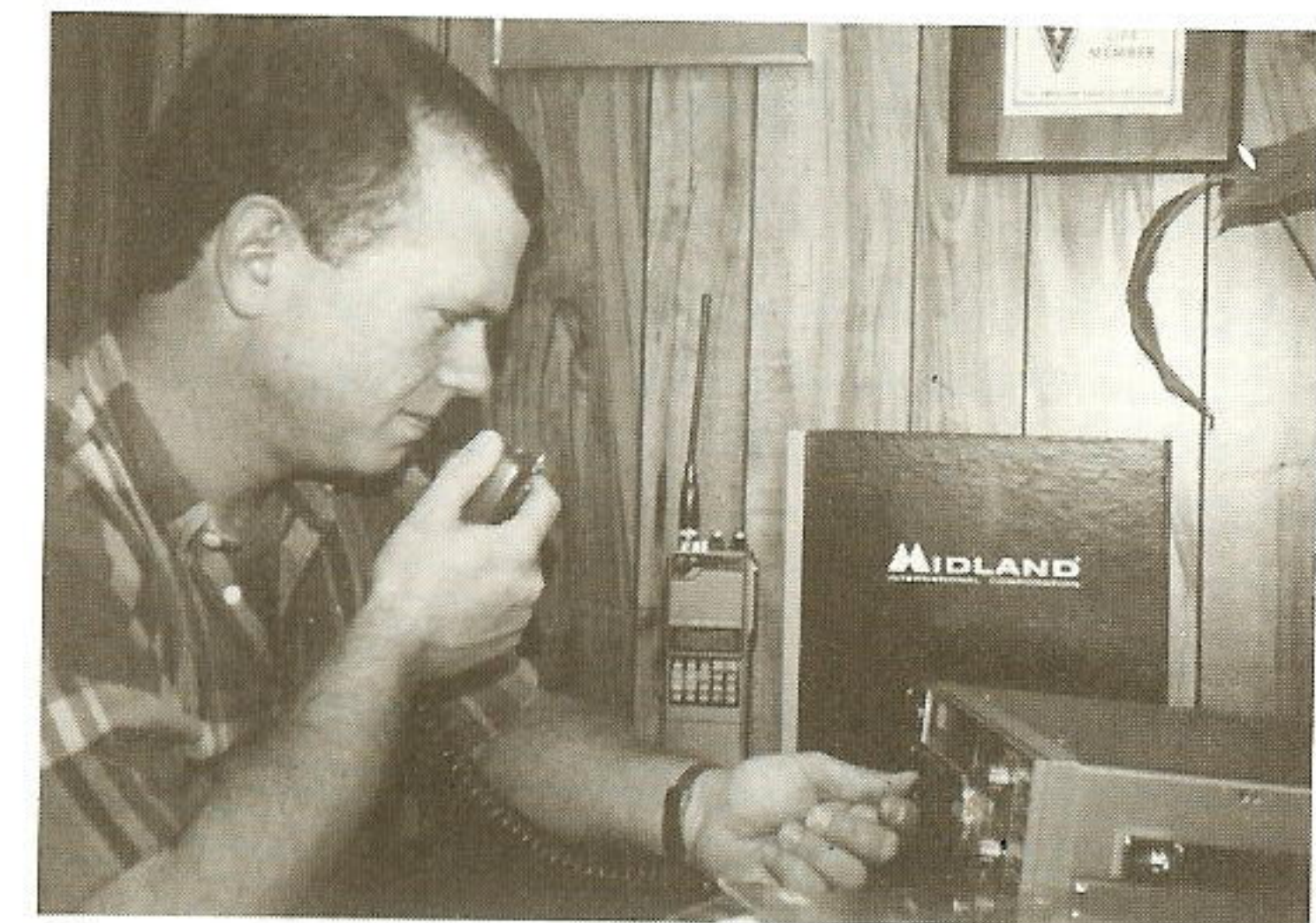
Now, he wants to organize other GSU ham operators into a club. He calls it the GSU Employee Amateur Radio Society (EARS).

Boone estimates at least 30 to 40 people at GSU may be active in ham radio. A club, he says, could promote good public service throughout the company.

"We can get to know other ham operators in the company and share common interests with them," adds Boone.

Other utilities have ham operator groups and EARS could share information with them.

Amateur radio's



*Ham radio can be a family affair. Some couples use it to keep in touch with one another. "It's fun to talk with family and friends," says Boone.*

history is filled with firsts. Boone says the first television station in the United States was licensed to a ham operator. Commercial radio came out of ham operators transmitting music during this century's teen years. In the 1940s, ham operators were the first to use the moon as a giant reflector and "bounce" radio signals back to the earth.



*Boone demonstrates putting a mobile ham radio on the air. Its quick setup capability helps in emergency situations.*

"Some say the value of ham radio has diminished in recent years, with cellular phones and satellite communication," says Boone. He disagrees.

During the gas explosion at a storage facility near Brenham, Texas, Boone says phone lines jammed with emergency calls. Nearby ham operators linked with others in Austin and gave Brenham additional needed communication.

Boone says ham radio has several rewards for him. "It lets me do things on my own. It pointed me to my career. I've even met several celebrities, including the Houston Oilers Cheerleaders."

He refers to the close association between local ham operators and Hughen School. After nearly ten years, he still gets emotional recalling how one little girl thanked the ham operators for transmitting closed-circuit television pictures of an air show and golf tournament benefit to the school.

"I love to experiment and play around with radio. I have a thirst for knowledge. I can always find something new to do in it," says Boone about his hobby. "It's fun to talk with friends and family. And I get inner satisfaction knowing I've helped someone."

Boone says he would like to help any employee who might be interested in joining EARS or learning about ham radio. Contact him in Conroe at 722-2400.





# A conversation

*Lee Miller, GSU's vice president of human resources, discusses their concerns about the pending merger. Plain Talks believes GSU families will be well-served.*

Bett

**You've held a number of meetings with employees to answer their questions about the GSU/Entergy combination. What are the major concerns expressed and how would these translate to spouses?**

I've had a number of meetings in Edison Plaza with management employees to answer their questions about the merger agreement. I think the primary question on the minds of each spouse would be the same question employees had--"What's going to happen to me? Will my husband's or wife's job go away in the merger?" Unfortunately, it's too early to answer that question. No one really knows the answer.

First of all, it will take a considerable amount of time for the merger to be completed--at least 12 to 18 months. Then, after the merger is complete, the agreement pretty well spells out a three-year period of relative stability in that we will continue our operations and remain headquartered in Beaumont as a subsidiary of Entergy. Entergy has confirmed that reductions taking place as a result of the merger would be expected to first occur through attrition and early retirements. And finally, the agreement does ensure, that if any layoffs do take place, management employees will receive the severance package we used in 1990 when management rightsized our company. I think those things, taken together, at least offer a base line of timing and assurance for employees and their families. I've also counseled people not to listen to rumors, concern themselves with the worst or make precipitous moves.

**Could you review for us the major components of the 1990 management severance package?**

The 1990 management severance package is set out in a schedule attached to the merger agreement, but to review the highlights:

- There would be two months' paid administrative leave of absence during which your benefits would continue
- A half month's pay for each year of service to a maximum of 24 years of service
- Pay for unused vacation
- Six months of continued medical benefits in addition to the two months of medical plan benefits provided in your administrative leave (for a total of eight months of medical benefits)
- Professional outplacement assistance and
- After you have used your eight months of medical benefits, the government allows you to extend medical coverage under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) for an additional 12 months.

In addition to severance, if you are 50 years of age or older at the time your separation is effective and have 10

years of actual unbroken service, you will be eligible for an enriched early retirement program, which consists of:

- Your retirement benefit being based on a three-year average of base pay
- No reduction based on age if you are between the ages of 60 and 65
- A 2 percent reduction based on age for each year between the ages of 50 and 60
- A \$500 per month social security bridge until you reach the age of 62 (after age 62, the federal government provides social security benefits)

Those are all things spelled out for management employees.

**What about classified employees?**

Bargaining unit benefits are covered in the collective bargaining agreement. Under National Labor Relations laws, it would be inappropriate for the management of Gulf States and Entergy to get together and decide, without collective bargaining, what union employees should receive. Consequently, the merger agreement states very clearly that the new corporation will recognize I. B. E. W. Local 2286 as the bargaining agent for classified employees, bargain with them in good faith and honor the contract that is in force at the time the merger is effective. Entergy has a history of dealing fairly and equitably with their employees.

**So are you saying that our conversation here is limited to management employees because classified employees are covered under the bargaining agreement?**

Yes, that's right.

**Speaking of benefits then, will benefits for management employees remain substantially as they are now for three years after the merger?**

The agreement says there will be little or no change in employee benefits for three years after the effective date of the merger. Now we have to realize that benefits constantly evolve, so I don't want to say that things will be exactly the same three years after the merger agreement as they were at the time the deal was done. That's important for employees to understand. GSU's benefits have changed over the years and we're continuing to look at changes; that's also true for Entergy. However, both Entergy and GSU have very good benefit programs. I personally



# with Lee Miller

*in resources, recently met with employees to  
ing combination with Entergy Corporation.  
ll find this information beneficial as well.*

y  
Gavora

have little anxiety about what will happen to employee benefits because both companies understand it's necessary to have good benefits to attract and keep good employees and to survive in the marketplace. Both companies know the advantage of having competitive benefits.

## **What about medical benefits? That's a major concern for spouses.**

Entergy's benefits are comparable to GSU's benefits although Entergy is ahead of us in terms of flexible benefit programs. They're at a place where we had hoped to be sometime in the future. Flex benefits offer employees choices for their particular family situation. Consequently, I think that, should our employees move into Entergy plans, they would find them quite acceptable.

## **The other question which comes up for families is-- "What if we have to relocate?"**

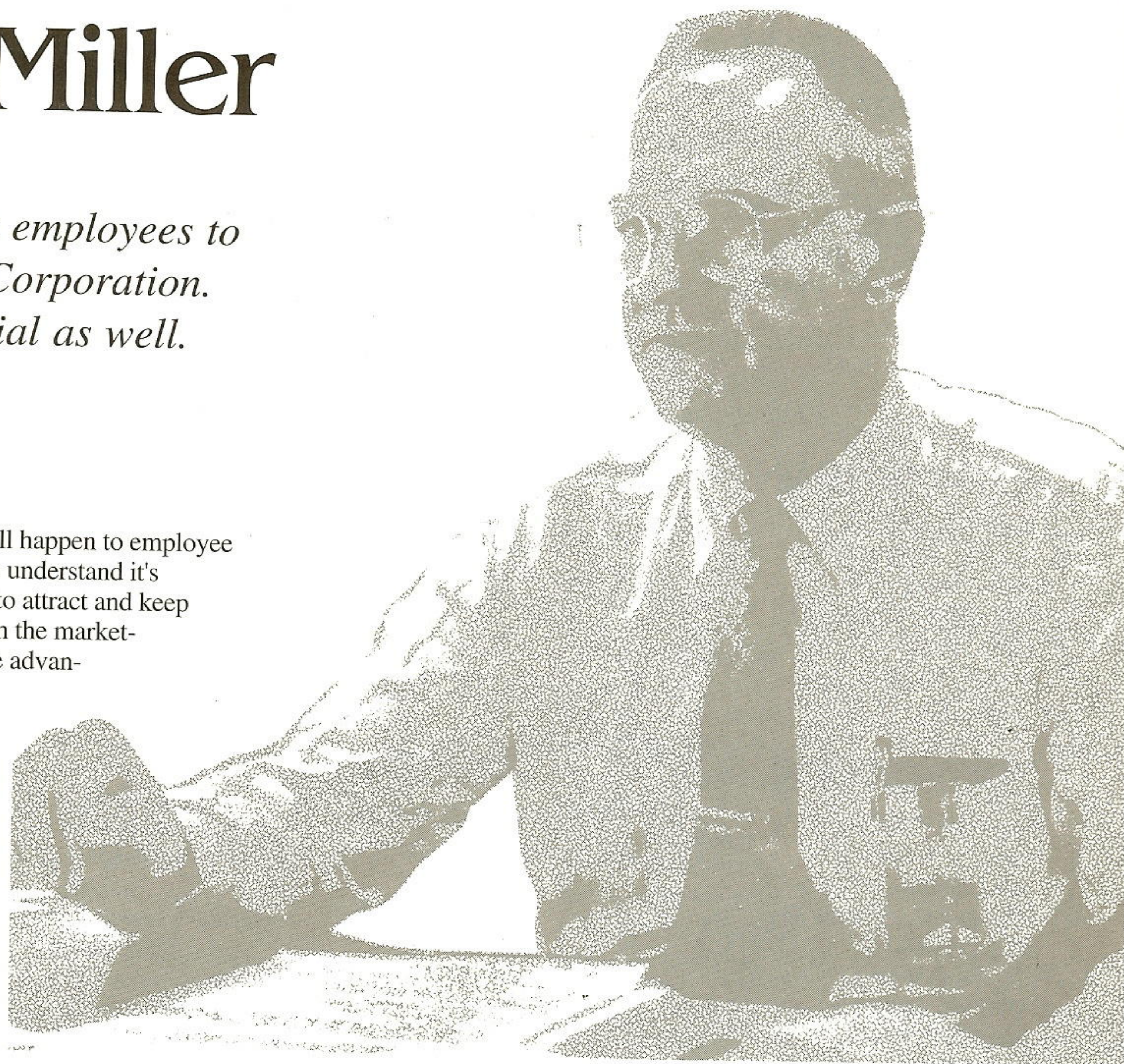
Relocations within the GSU service area, at least for the three-year term stated in the agreement, would be covered by Gulf States' relocation package. Relocations to a site within the Entergy service area would be covered by the Entergy relocation policy. It appears to me that Entergy's relocation package is quite similar to ours.

## **What would happen if both spouses work at Gulf States and one spouse is transferred?**

We will do everything we can to help the other spouse find a position in that location. This is a difficult aspect of relocations for all companies throughout the nation. Sometimes we're successful and sometimes we're not. But we would do everything we could to try to help.

## **Overall, what would you say about Entergy's benefits?**

Taken as a whole, our benefits and Entergy's benefits are very similar. If you weighed Entergy's benefits on one scale and our benefits on another, they would be about equal.



## **A number of employees have questions about staffing levels at Gulf States compared to Entergy. What can you say about this?**

Again, it's impossible to speculate about how the final organization will be staffed, how many and where. Organizations constantly change as business needs change. Entergy is in the process of restructuring its units to meet future business needs. At the appropriate time, we will begin working with Entergy on the transition of our company into the Entergy Corp. In that process many of our questions will be answered.

## **In conclusion, what would you like to say to the families?**

Throughout the long negotiations that led to the merger, our management emphasized the fact we have very good employees, and we have dealt fairly and honestly with them in the past and will continue to do so. I believe Entergy has that same positive attitude toward their employees. So I think the important thing for all of us who work here is to continue to do our jobs well and for families to continue to give their GSU family members their support with the assurance they will be treated fairly and honestly.



# SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

May/June

# 1992

## 40 YEARS

**Henry R. Green**

Electric T&D

Baton Rouge

**Horace A. Taylor**

Plant Production

Sabine Station

## 30 YEARS

**William D. Bates**

Electric T&D

Lake Charles

**Chester O. Draper Jr.**

Plant Production

Sabine Station

**Wiltz C. Hanks Jr.**

Electric T&D

Lake Charles

**Calvin J. Hebert**

Executive Department

Beaumont

**Robert L. Hill**

Plant Production

Sabine Station

**Manfield Hollin**

Electric T&D

Baton Rouge

**Louis W. Jones**

Electric T&D

Baton Rouge

**Glenda G. Sims**

Electric T&D

Silsbee

**Olice A. Steward**

Risk Mgt. Services

Beaumont

## 20 YEARS

**Audrey S. Evans**

General Services

Beaumont

**Myrl D. Heath**

Electric T&D

Conroe

**Larry D. Helms**

Electric T&D

Beaumont

**James A. McLaughlin**

Energy Resources

Beaumont

**Harold W. Newman Jr.**

Electric T&D

Conroe

**David L. Smythia**

Design Engineering

Beaumont

## 10 YEARS

**Roger J. Backen**

Bus Sys. & Oversight

River Bend

**Connie F. Ball**

Plant Production

Nelson Coal

**David N. Beard**

Plant Production

Willow Glen

**Kathryn A. Bennett**

Electric T&D

The Woodlands

**Charles A. Bergt**

Design Engineering

Beaumont

**Howard A. Boyer**

Electric T&D

Lafayette

**Dalton R. Broussard**

Plant Production

Nelson Coal

**Dennis F. Broussard**

Engineering Services

Baton Rouge

**Joyce W. Buchanan**

Electric T&D

Baton Rouge

**John A. Bunn**

General Services

Beaumont

**Samuel G. Burke IV**

Plant Production

Nelson Coal

**Joseph D. Cascio**

Electric T&D

Baton Rouge

**Milton B. Castille**

Plant Production

Nelson Coal

**Tony M. Causey**

Gas Department

Baton Rouge

**Cleveland C. Como Jr.**

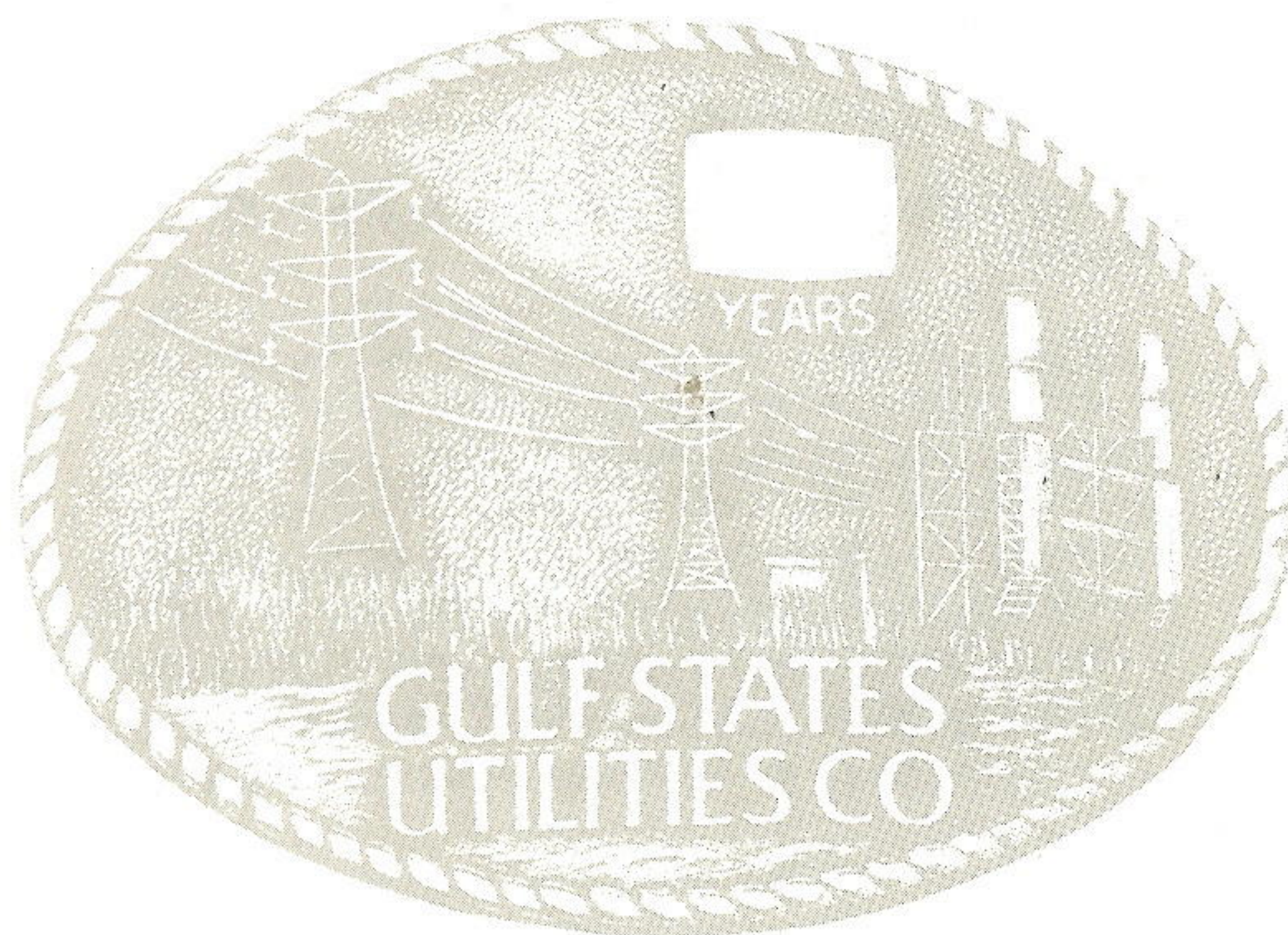
Design Engineering

Beaumont

**Debra M. Cowart**

Division Accounting

Beaumont





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Electric T&D  
Cleveland

**Alene W. Ernst**  
Accounting Services  
Beaumont

**Gale D. Flowers**  
Electric T&D  
Conroe

**Percy J. Frank**  
Materials Mgt.  
Beaumont

**Alfred H. Gahn**  
Plant Production  
Nelson Station

**James Galloway Jr.**  
Plant Production  
Nelson Station

**Bobby G. Gillard Jr.**  
Electric T&D  
Lake Charles

**Craig S. Golson**  
Electric T&D  
Beaumont

**Lauren H. Gremillion**  
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**Noland A. Mitchell**  
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Nelson Coal

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**Mary S. Moore**  
Gas Department  
Baton Rouge

**James B. Newberry**  
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**Paula S. Phillips**  
Electric T&D  
Baton Rouge

**William A. Pinkerton**  
Accounting Services  
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**David L. Robinson**  
RBNG Engrg. & Admin.  
River Bend

**Michael T. Rodgers**  
Corp. Communications  
Beaumont

**Kevin G. Simion**  
Plant Production  
Nelson Station

**Mark C. Simmons**  
Electric T&D  
Orange

**Sue P. Smith**  
System Production  
Beaumont

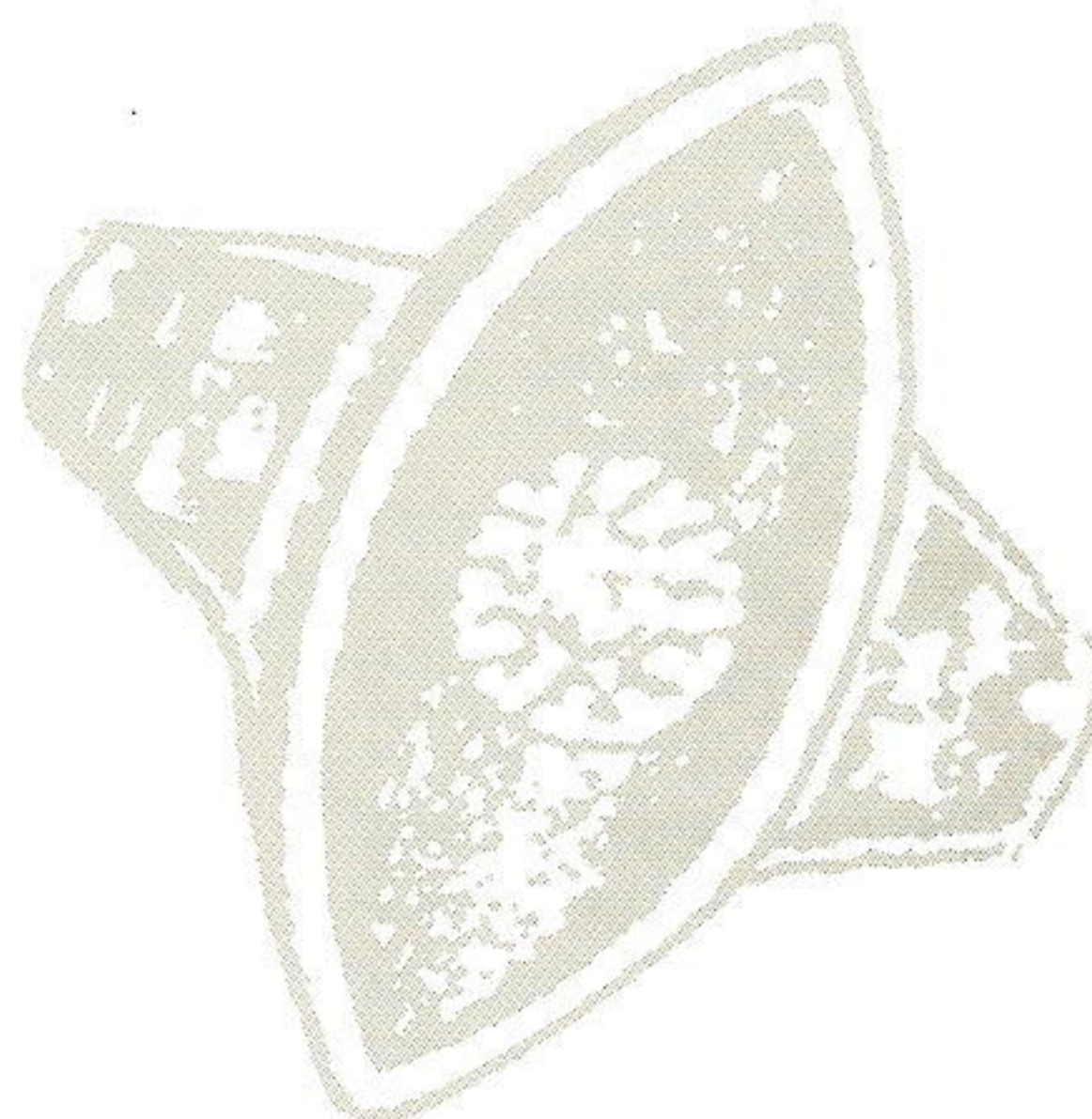
**James E. Toohey**  
Plant Production  
Sabine Station

**Clinton W. Walling**  
Plant Operations  
River Bend

**Patrick J. Walsh**  
Electric T&D  
Conroe

**Ronald D. Wheeler**  
Electric T&D  
Conroe

**John R. Williams**  
Plant Production  
Nelson Coal





# ON THE MOVE

## Promotions from May 1 - June 30, 1992

**Badeaux, Carl J.**, Baton Rouge, to apprentice-line & service departments, Electric T&D (1).

**Barton, James C.**, Conroe, to substation mechanic 2nd class, Electric T&D (8).

**Becker, David K.**, Beaumont, to senior engineering equipment analyst, Engineering-Standards (13).

**Bougeus, Sam D.**, River Bend, to technical specialist, RBNG-Plant Operations (5).

**Boyle, Brian J.**, River Bend, to nuclear fuels engineer, RBNG-Engineering-Engineering Analysis (2).

**Broussard, Damon A.**, Port Arthur, to apprentice-line and service departments, Electric T&D (1).

**Caldwell, Brian W.**, Beaumont, to supervisor-fixed assets and depreciation accounting, Accounting Services (5).

**Cavanaugh, Charles E.**, Navasota, to lineman 2nd class, Electric T&D (9).

**Clements, Donald M.**, Beaumont, to general manager-strategic projects, Executive Department (14).

**Cockerham, Kenneth W.**, Baton Rouge, to relay foreman, T&D-Relay & Communications (11).

**Colleps, Glenn M.**, Baton Rouge, to lineman 1st class, Electric T&D (13).

**Cruz, Joe F.**, Conroe, to lineman 2nd class, Electric T&D (8).

**Cummings, Lori F.**, Beaumont, to senior placement specialist, Human Resources (2).

**Daigle, Kevin C.**, Lafayette, to lineman 3rd class, Electric T&D (3).

**Dennis, Frank A.**, Jennings, to lineman 4th class, Electric T&D (3 months).

**Dugas, Dale P.**, River Bend, to master nuclear chemistry technician, RBNG-Plant Production (3).

**English, Teresa G.**, Port Arthur, to customer contact clerk, Division Accounting (13).

**Foxworth, Jerry W.**, Woodville, to lineman 2nd class, Electric T&D (1).

**Gaus, Henry J. II**, Sabine Station, to electrician 2nd class, Plant Production (12).

**Gilchriest, Franklin D.**, Beaumont, to collector, Division Accounting (12).

**Givens, Jessie R.**, River Bend, to storeroom assistant, RBNG-Business Systems (1).

**Grantham, Samuel A.**, Conroe, to test technician 2nd class, Plant Production (1).

**Green, Hayward L. Jr.**, Beaumont, to shop & field tester, Electric T&D (10 months).

**Hartwick, LeNoal R.**, Beaumont, to design engineer, Engineering (5).

**Hasten, Melvin L.**, Gonzales, to lineman 4th class, Electric T&D (2).

**Heard, Allen A.**, Beaumont, to staff accountant I, Rates and Regulatory Affairs (3).

**Henning, Stephen B.**, Lake Charles, to repairman 2nd class, Plant Production (3).

**Hicks, Douglas B.**, Beaumont, to substation mechanic 2nd class, Electric T&D (9).

**Hopkins, Barbara G.**, Port Arthur, to customer contact clerk, division accounting (17).

**Huiatt, Michael A.**, River Bend, to senior systems engineer, RBNG-Plant Operations (5).

**Huiatt, Timothy S.**, River Bend, to nuclear chemistry technician 1st class, RBNG-Plant Production (6 months).

**James, Lerail**, Lake Charles, to lineman 4th class, electric T&D (2).

**Jenkinson, Donna P.**, Port Arthur, to customer contact clerk, Division Accounting (5).

**Jones, Amon G. Jr.**, Conroe, to engineering assistant, Electric T&D, (6 months).

**Kelly, Patricia H.**, River Bend, to radiation protection foreman, RBNG-Plant Operations (3).

**Kelly, Thomas J.**, The Woodlands, to general line supervisor, T&D -Line (24).

**Kohler, Llewellyn K.**, Baton Rouge, to lineman 1st class, Electric T&D (10).

**Lenox, Floyd E.**, River Bend, to senior technical specialist, RBNG-Oversight-Quality Assurance (3).

**Lewis, Lionel Jr.**, Gonzales, to apprentice-line and service departments, Electric T&D (1).

**Lynch, John J.**, River Bend, to principal engineer, RBNG-Engineering (1).

**Marks, Kenneth R.**, Lake Charles, to lineman 3rd class, Electric T&D (1).

**Marks, Janet D.**, Lake Charles, to stenographer-senior, Division Operations (1).

**Martin, Heath A.**, Baton Rouge, to apprentice-line & service departments, Electric T&D (1).

**McClelland, Brian E.**, Beaumont, to staff auditor I, Internal Audits (2).

**Melancon, Phyllis B.**, Sabine Station, to data analyst, Plant Production (11).

**Moore, Henry A.**, Port Arthur, to lineman 4th class, Electric T&D (6 months).

**Morris, William J.**, Huntsville, to lineman 3rd class, Electric T&D (3 months).

**Newberry, James B.**, Beaumont, to meterman 1st class, Electric T&D (10).

**Peno, Michael E.**, River Bend, to senior planning & scheduling specialist, RBNG-Plant Operations-Maintenance (5).

**Pierce, Gene W. Jr.**, Baton



# Clements, Donnelly named to new positions

Rouge, to electrician 2nd class, Plant Production (6 months).

**Rabb, Archie M. III**, River Bend, to radiation protection technician 3rd class, RBNG-Plant Production (3).

**Reeves, William B.**, Baton Rouge, to repairman 1st class, Plant Production (10).

**Rideaux, Nellie S.**, Lake Charles, to meter reader, Division Accounting (2).

**Rutledge, Billie M.**, Port Arthur, to storekeeper, Plant Production (13).

**Sandlin, Larry D.**, River Bend, to senior technical specialist, RBNG-Engineering-Design Engineering (2).

**Shannon, Francis X.**, Port Arthur, to apprentice-line & service departments, Electric T&D (2).

**Simmons, William J.**, River Bend, to senior licensing engineer, RBNG-Oversight (5).

**Stevenson, Hurtis W.**, Baton Rouge, to serviceman 1st class, Electric T&D (11).

**Watson, Mark A.**, Beaumont, to turbine maintenance supervisor, System Production-Production Support (7).

**Welch, Barbara M.**, Conroe, to supervisor-customer accounts, Division Accounting (22).

**Werner, Linda Z.**, Beaumont, to secretary-executive, Executive-Secretarial Staff (15).

**Wesberry, Milton D.**, River Bend, to electrical maintenance foreman, RBNG-Plant Operations-Maintenance (4).

**Willis, Thomas R.**, Conroe, to lineman 2nd class, Electric T&D (3 months).

**Young, Christopher L.**, River Bend, to plant chemist, RBNG-Plant Operations-Operations, Radwaste & Chemistry (7).

( ) denotes years of service

GSU's board of directors recently elected Donald M. Clements Jr. vice president of strategic projects. The board also elected Board Chairman and CEO Joseph L. Donnelly to the additional position of president.

Clements, who was named general manager of strategic projects in June, has responsibility for coordinating the company's proposed business combination with Entergy Corp. He will oversee both the informational exchange and the operational transition between the two companies. An attorney by training, Clements will continue to be involved in some litigation and a pending Texas fuel reconciliation case.

Clements joined Gulf States in 1978 and has worked in various positions as an attorney in

the Legal Services Department. He received a bachelor of arts degree from Texas Christian University in 1971 and earned his doctor of jurisprudence degree from the University of Houston in 1974.

Donnelly, who was named CEO in January and chairman of the board March 1, joined Gulf States in 1979 as senior vice president of finance. He became executive vice president and chief financial officer in 1986 and later that year was elected to the GSU board of directors.

A Pennsylvania native, Donnelly received his bachelor of science degree in political science from the University of Scranton and his doctor of jurisprudence degree from the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

## Supervisory promotions announced

Three employees have received promotions to supervisor. Effective June 1, Mark A. Watson, 35, became turbine maintenance supervisor, System Production, Beaumont; and Thomas J. Kelly, 45, became general line supervisor, Western Division T&D. Effective June 16, Barbara M. Welch, 56, became supervisor-customer accounts.

**Watson** joined Gulf States in 1985 as an outage coordinator. Prior to his promotion, he was production engineer, lead production engineer and senior production engineer. Watson received a bachelor of science degree in engineering technology from New Mexico State University in 1979. Born in Midland, Texas, Watson and his wife,

Kathy, are the parents of a daughter, Kali, and a son, Marcus.

**Kelly**, a 24-year veteran of Gulf States, joined the company as a T&D helper in Orange. He also held such positions as substation mechanic, lineman, utility foreman, inspector-contract crews, coordinator-MRS and supervisor-contract crews.

**Welch** joined the Western Division in 1970 and held various clerk positions in Division Accounting. In 1979, she became section head of telephone services. Welch, a native of Kilgore, Texas, is married to Harry Welch and has two daughters, Vera and Melissa Williams, and one son, Ryan Williams.



# MAILBOX



Pris Gallagher



Shivaun Davis

## Environmental friends

"I would like to thank you for your help with our Earth Day Project, 'Math and Science Teachers Measure Up,' writes Nancy Roberts, executive director, Friends of the Environment, Baton Rouge to **Shivaun Davis**, Louisiana Communications, Baton Rouge. "The project was a huge success. All of the math and science teachers' professional organizations picked up new members through the promotion.

"I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Gulf States Utilities for the Golden Cypress Award. It was an unexpected surprise and quite an honor to be the first recipient. Thank you for considering Friends of the Environment and our work worthy of recognition. I look forward to working together on other projects."

## Tree trimming talk

"Many times our misunderstanding of events leads us into...saying wrong things," writes Jack Hallaron, Conroe customer, to **John Conley**, vice president-Western Division. "This happened to me recently... "I...decided to call you folks and try to understand why my beautiful trees had to be harshly trimmed or cut.

"**Steve White** came to see me and through the professional, knowledgeable and personal way in which he handled the situation, it was solved in a pleasant and graceful manner. I am quite pleased he came to see me.

"He is a credit to GSU and his assistant **Barney Neal** is also a classy fellow who promotes goodwill and a positive image for your company. With these men handling customers in the field for you, your job should be most pleasant."

White is right-of-way maintenance supervisor and Neal is inspector-tree trimming. Both are located in Conroe.

## Absolutely magnificent

**Jim Moss**, vice president-marketing, received this letter from Dr. Sanford B. Dooley, extension economist, Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge:

"This brief note is an attempt to express my thanks for the exemplary effort by **Sam Richardson** at the Louisiana Community Economic Development Institute...Mr. Richardson was involved in the project from start to finish. He served on the planning committee which met many times to hammer out details for the program. He also helped 'ram-rod' the case study groups our 80 participants were divided into. This group of volunteers, mayors, police jurors, bankers and chamber of commerce staffers were provided a set of workable tools and models to use in making their communities a better place to live...I know they were impressed with Sam.

"Thank you for allowing us the privilege of working with this dedicated young professional. We truly could not have done it without him."

Richardson is an economic development agent located in Baton Rouge.

## Wonderful help

Woodville customer Nina Norris sent this note to the Woodville office:

"I want to offer my sincere thanks for the \$6 deduction and special thanks to **Betty Cauthen** for her wonderful help."

Cauthen is a part-time clerk in Woodville. She helped set up Norris on the Seniorwise Rate for customers over 65.

## Ram rain dedication

At 10 a.m. on the morning of June 1, lightning struck the Ram Forge & Steel Inc. shop in Navasota causing a power outage. In a letter to **John Browning**, superintendent-Navasota, B. J. Gruner, vice president, Ram Forge & Steel Inc., describes the events of that day:

"In our business of special forged and machined fittings, we are in need of every minute of machine time possible. We work two 20-hour shifts, usually six days a week, and are seldom caught up. When we are out of power, it is very expensive both in lost wages and in lost machine time.

"I placed a call to your office explaining that our power was off. The lady was very courteous and explained that someone would be out as soon as possible. With the severity of the storm, I did not expect any one soon. In about five minutes, **Norman Lofland** called and said he would be out shortly. I told him it was still raining real hard, and just to come when he felt it was safe.

"Shortly, I saw the first Gulf States truck drive in the gate. When I left for lunch, there were several Gulf States trucks, along with several men. A transformer was hanging from the bucket truck, men were working and it continued to rain hard. I was impressed at their dedication. By around 2:30 p.m., our power was back on and our men were at work again.

"I wish to express my thanks to you, and all of the people that worked so hard to get our power back on as soon as possible, in very adverse conditions."

Lofland is a serviceman-1st class. The lady answering the phone was **Betty Dickschat**, customer contact clerk. Both are located in Navasota.



# Pssst... Here's the latest

by Kim McMurray

"Did you hear the one about...?"

During the last couple of years, that phrase (or something similar) has been oft-repeated by Gulf States employees. But it wasn't the introduction to a joke or off-color story; it meant there was a rumor to follow.

Every corporation (or, for that matter, any place where two people converse with one another) is a breeding ground for rumor or gossip. But when a company is involved in merger negotiations, the rumor mill constantly operates at maximum capacity. If the economy kept our power plants that busy, sales would be soaring.

Prior to June 8, I think we had reached the saturation point on merger gossip. The grapevine was growing like ivy. You name it and the rumor factory had it happening. No matter what the final outcome had been, someone could have said he or she was "in the know," "plugged into the pipeline" or had "unimpeachable sources." What that probably meant is: They took a wild stab and guessed correctly.

Everyone loves gossip. If they didn't, there wouldn't be so many supermarket tabloids making so much money. Nor would there be such popular TV shows as "Current Affair" and "Hard Copy."

Maybe we should capitalize on society's fascination with gossip by revamping **Plain Talks**. We could change its name to something like (Scott) **Harper's Bizarre** and start featuring such articles as:

*Alien meets with Joe Donnelly!*

*Loch Ness monster devours Sabine Station!*

*Three-year-old grandmother joins Senior-Wise program!*

*Killer bees attack Louie the Lightning Bug!*

You get the idea.

...



In the interest of full disclosure and in accordance with the high moral standards of *Kim's Korner*, I hereby conclude this column with a "True Confession": I unwittingly helped spread a rumor. (As opposed to wittingly spreading one.)

Some time ago, someone (whose identity I cannot recall) told me that when the lottery started in Louisiana, GSU experienced a dramatic increase in collection problems in that state. In other words, people were buying lottery tickets with money they should have used to pay their electric bills.

I later repeated that story to several people in the company. Only recently did I bother to ask the people who really know. The two division accounting superintendents in Louisiana, Van Hereford and Jack Judice, say there's nothing to that rumor. If anything, they are doing better than ever when it comes to collections.

In Beaumont, Charlie Bordeman says he also hasn't noticed any difference since the Texas lottery started.

There. My conscience is clear.

...

By the way, did you hear that Elvis was seen paying an electric bill in Beaumont the other day?



# PLAIN TALKS

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