

# PLAIN TALKS

September 1986

*“Thank you  
for getting  
my lights  
on!”*



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Number 7

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## PLAIN TALKS

**September 1986**

Published for employees and retirees of Gulf States Utilities Company. No portion of the contents of this magazine may be reproduced without written permission of the publisher. Address all communications to PLAIN TALKS, Gulf States Utilities Company, P. O. Box 2951, Beaumont, Texas 77704, Phone (409) 838-6631.

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Employees who change residences or offices should fill out company mailing-address-change forms (GSU0012-00-81) and return them to the mailroom in the Edison Plaza. GSU publications, departmental mailings and other company information are not automatically forwarded; addressees must be corrected when employees move.



## Help appreciated

Jack Worthy  
Gulf States Utilities  
Beaumont, Texas

Dear Jack:

"Celebrate Southeast Texas" was a success extremely well done. The support of you and your staff was appreciated. B.D. Strait and the staff helped make our CEO tour one of the best. The printed information given to each CEO was critical to selling the area. Gayle Barnett and the staff showed tremendous enthusiasm and support when asked for anything.

It is people like you and the staff and the effort put forth that will help reap the benefits for the 391,000 people in the Triplex area. The results of your time and energy given to "Celebrate Southeast Texas" will definitely be realized in the future.

Sincerely,  
Tommy Warren  
Chairman  
Celebrate Southeast Texas

**Editor's note:** Worthy is vice president-general services, Strait is section head-reproduction and Barnett is section head. All work in Edison Plaza.

## Support appreciated

Virgil Fuselier  
Gulf States Utilities  
Lafayette, La.

Dear Mr. Fuselier:

Thank you so much for your generous contribution to the Acadiana Chapter of the March of Dimes. With your help, we can make a difference in the fight against birth defects. Medical miracles are happening every day, thanks to wonderful people like you and your employees at Gulf States Utilities Company who care enough to give to the March of Dimes.

We will fight birth defects with your contribution through

research, medical services and education, because we believe every baby in Acadiana has the right to be born beautifully perfect and perfectly beautiful.

Thanks again for your caring and generosity.

Sincerely,  
Sharon Smith  
Executive Director  
Acadiana March of Dimes

**Editor's note:** Fuselier is supervisor-consumer services in Lafayette.

## Economic development

John Adams  
Gulf States Utilities  
Conroe, Texas

Dear John:

I would like to thank you and John Tarver for your time and effort in putting together the package of possible buildings for our company to consider for relocating in the Conroe area.

The service offered by Gulf States Utilities is extremely helpful to small businesses like ours. The time spent with you folks last Wednesday was extremely valuable and saved us days and weeks of searching.

We were very happy with what we saw, and if things work out we will relocate our business in Conroe. Conroe and the surrounding area offers everything we need, both personal and business.

Again, thank you.

Best regards,  
Russell Davis  
Vis-Tex Company, Inc.  
Spring, Texas

**Editor's note:** Adams is an industrial representative in Conroe, while Tarver is an economic development specialist in Beaumont.

## Edison says thanks

Ron McKenzie  
Gulf States Utilities  
Port Arthur, Texas

Dear Mr. McKenzie:

I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for the splendid presentation Mrs. Sue Williams made to the students of Thomas Edison Middle School.

This community and your company are fortunate to be represented by such a competent and capable speaker and instructor as Mrs. Williams.

As future citizens and future Gulf States customers, the students are much better informed than before her visit.

The students look forward to her visits each semester and I hope they will continue.

Again, thanks for being such a nice neighbor.

Yours truly,  
Charles Martin  
Thomas Edison Middle School

## THE COVER

Even before Hurricane Bonnie pushed and shoved her way through Southeast Texas, Gulf States was gearing up to handle whatever damage would be left in her wake. She left behind hundreds of downed tree limbs which fell on power lines, plunging thousands of GSU customers into the dark for anywhere from several hours to several days.

Gulf States crews responded quickly and efficiently, meeting the challenge and often working under difficult conditions to put back together what Bonnie tore apart.

Many customers who appreciated the hard work expressed their gratitude in letters to the company. The message on the cover was one such letter from a Beaumont woman. Others appear in the story on page 10.



# Neches Repair Shop: 'Price, quality,

by Susan Gilley

A shiny new sign outside the Neches Station Repair Shop proclaims, "Price, Quality, Service — We Do It Better."

The GSUsers who staff the repair shop not only adopted the motto, they committed themselves to translating it into action, says Mike Denton, former planning coordinator at Neches and now coordinator-production projects in Edison Plaza.

Aside from maintenance of the Neches units in long-term storage, work at the half-century-old plant revolves around the shop, where parts are manufactured and repairs are made to a wide variety of equipment. As an example of the diversity of work done by the shop, Denton points out that employees have repaired and fabricated parts for power plant equipment, substation equipment and garage vehicles and trailers.

The move to establish a shop got underway in 1984, recalls Jimmie Smith, plant superintendent. "We wanted to open a central repair facility at Neches that would make use of our skilled maintenance people. Obviously, there would be cost-savings attached to bringing it in-house."

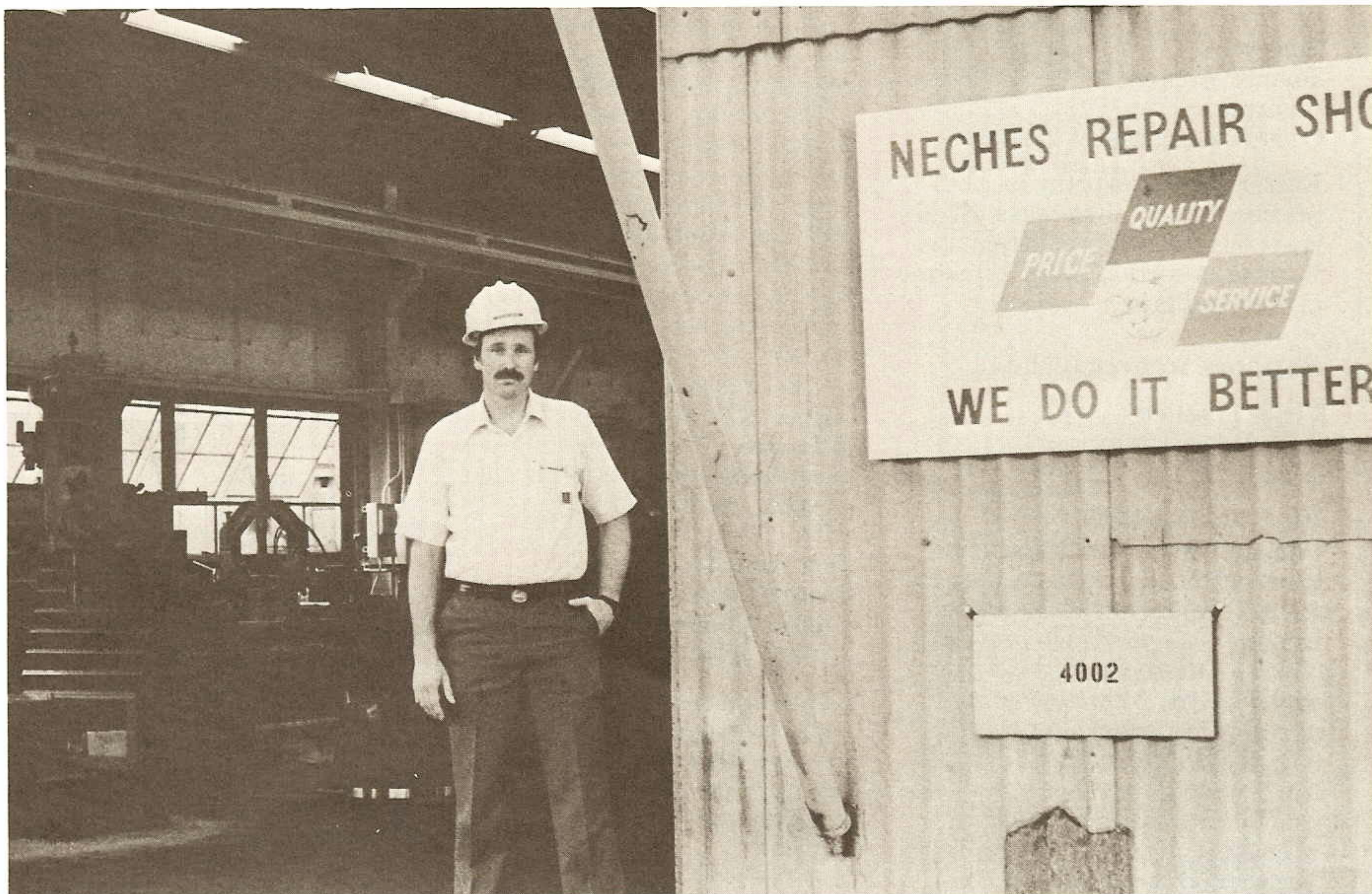
Two years later, the shop has become reality and a profit-centered operation, Smith reports.

Denton feels that two prevalent features of the shop probably contribute to its success. "Certainly, we feel like we're contributing to the stability of our jobs." Besides, he adds, "It stands to reason that you'll get a better repair job on anything from somebody familiar with the equipment. These people know power plants — much as a driver (who is a mechanic) is familiar with his car and knows all its little quirks."

Repair shop objectives aim at reducing Production Department expenses by providing quality repair at competitive costs, meeting schedules, manufacturing parts, salvaging discarded equipment, reducing inventory needs and using employees who are already capable of doing such work.

Both Denton and Smith are delighted to relate story after story of repair work that was carried out by the shop at a lower price in a much shorter period of time. "The time factor is often even more critical than the cost," Denton notes. "Luckily, the repair shop can prioritize GSU jobs — unlike outside concerns which may have a number of jobs from various customers."

But neither Denton nor Smith was content to rest on their laurels regarding the good reactions to the shop's work. "We needed some means of tracking all the



Mike Denton



# service — we do it better'

jobs in the repair shop." As a result, Denton developed a weekly update on jobs in the shop that is distributed by computer to all GSU power plants. Two days after it is distributed, Denton has the information he needs in a report showing the needs of the various plants.

Responsiveness to the in-house customer does not stop there, however. Each item repaired or

manufactured by the shop arrives at its destination with a little weatherproof tag carrying the worker's signature or initials. Feedback forms are also sent along with the item.

"The repaired item may sit on a shelf for a while," reveals Denton, "but we still wanted to know about its performance once it was put into service, so all of us got together and devised

these tools for getting feedback."

Repair shop employees have never been ashamed to tell people where they work, and recently they dreamed up yet another way of showing how proud they are of the work they do.

They're selling jackets, T-shirts and caps in various colors, each emblazoned with the Neches Repair Shop motto.



*Roger Frazier, repairman-1st class, works on a feedwater recirculation orifice plate for River Bend.*



*Norman Joseph, repairman-1st class, assembles a No. 1 screen wash pump for Lewis Creek after making repairs and modifications to the pump.*

## Donnelly named to board

Joseph L. Donnelly, senior executive vice president and chief financial officer for Gulf States Utilities Co., has been elected to the board of directors.

As a result of the action, taken at the June board meeting, GSU now has 14 directors.

A 28-year veteran of the electric utility industry, Donnelly worked for Pennsylvania Power & Light, eventually becoming vice president for finance, before joining GSU in 1979.

He earned a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Scranton in 1950 and a law degree from the University of Pennsylvania Law School in 1954. Before entering the electric utility industry, Donnelly

served as a law secretary to the Pennsylvania chief justice and as

a Pennsylvania deputy attorney general.



*Joseph L. Donnelly*



# Mullin chosen GSU Developer of the Year

by Susan Gilley

Not surprisingly, the economy posed the biggest obstacle to GSU's Economic Developer of the Year throughout 1985.

Gene Mullin, superintendent of the Sulphur District and a 32-year Gulf States' veteran, is the first recipient of what will become an annual designation.

Among Mullin's achievements in 1985 was helping obtain revenue bonds to finance a new truck terminal for Matlack Trucking in Sulphur. Mullin was also instrumental in locating two physicians, each with clinics, in the area.

"Several other people would have liked to have established businesses here, partly because of the readily-available supply of coke. They didn't, because the aluminum and steel markets were down, and that would have been their market," explains Mullin. He continues, "There were people who would have liked to have expanded their businesses, too, but they hesitated because they did not know what lies ahead (economically)."

According to John Bordelon, administrator-economic development in Beaumont, the award program was created to recognize the economic development contribution of district superintendents. "District superintendents are very important in economic development. They know their communities and often they get totally involved in development projects," Bordelon notes. "Many times," he adds, "a district superintendent will be the guiding force in the community working for economic development."

As part of the awards program, the entry packets developed for Mullin and each of the other entrants in the GSU Developer of the Year contest were entered in state-sponsored economic development competitions in

their respective states.

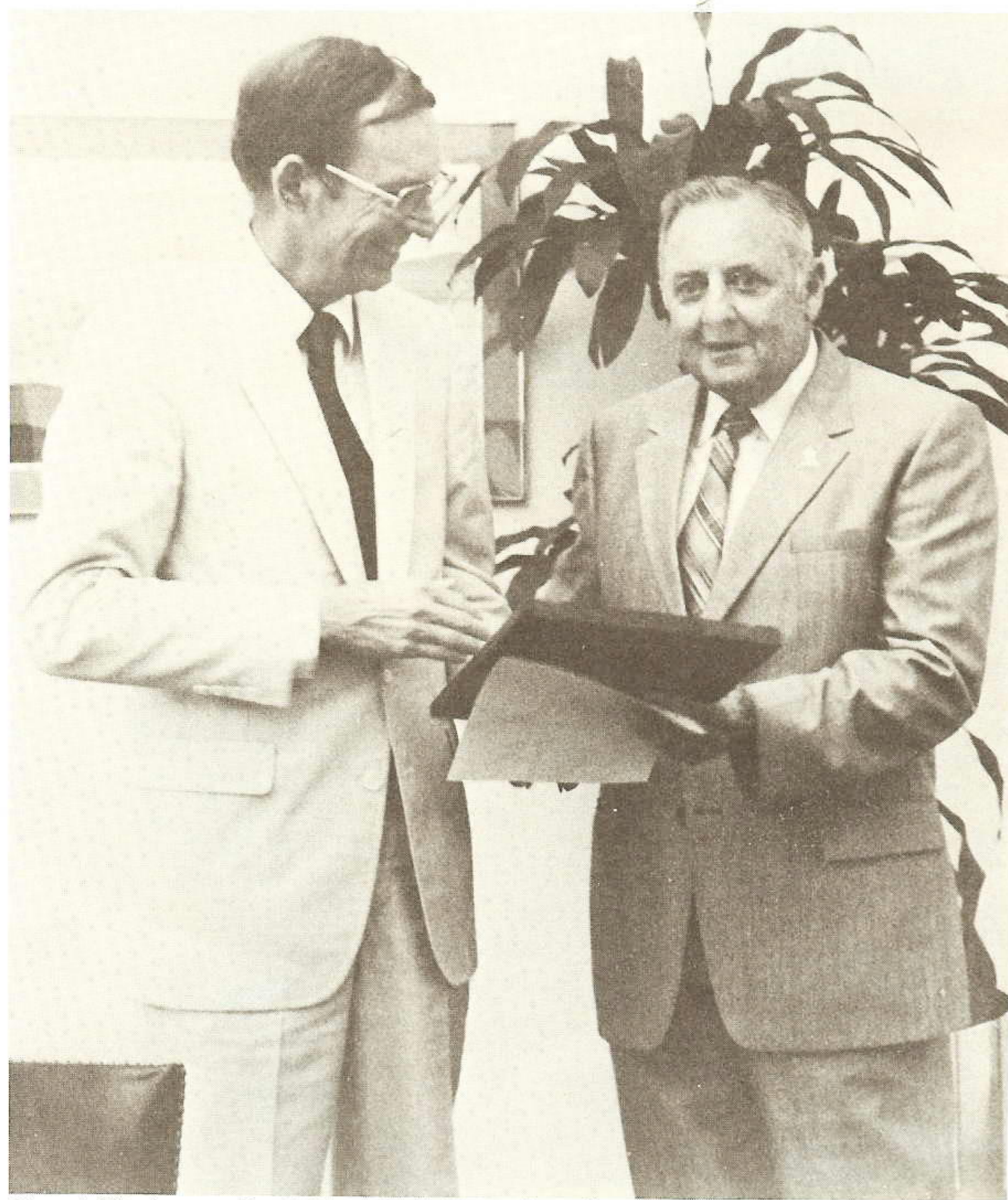
A panel of Chamber of Commerce executives representing each of GSU's five divisions judged the company competition. They were asked to consider the relative time and effort put forth by each nominee on activities that are related to the overall economic welfare of the community and area. Entrants were also judged according to the difficulty of achieving economic development goals.

Following his selection as the winner, Mullin received a congratulatory letter from Board Chairman Paul Murrill and President E. Linn Draper. They wrote that they realized Mullin has "worked diligently and provided the leadership in your district's

economic development projects for a number of years."

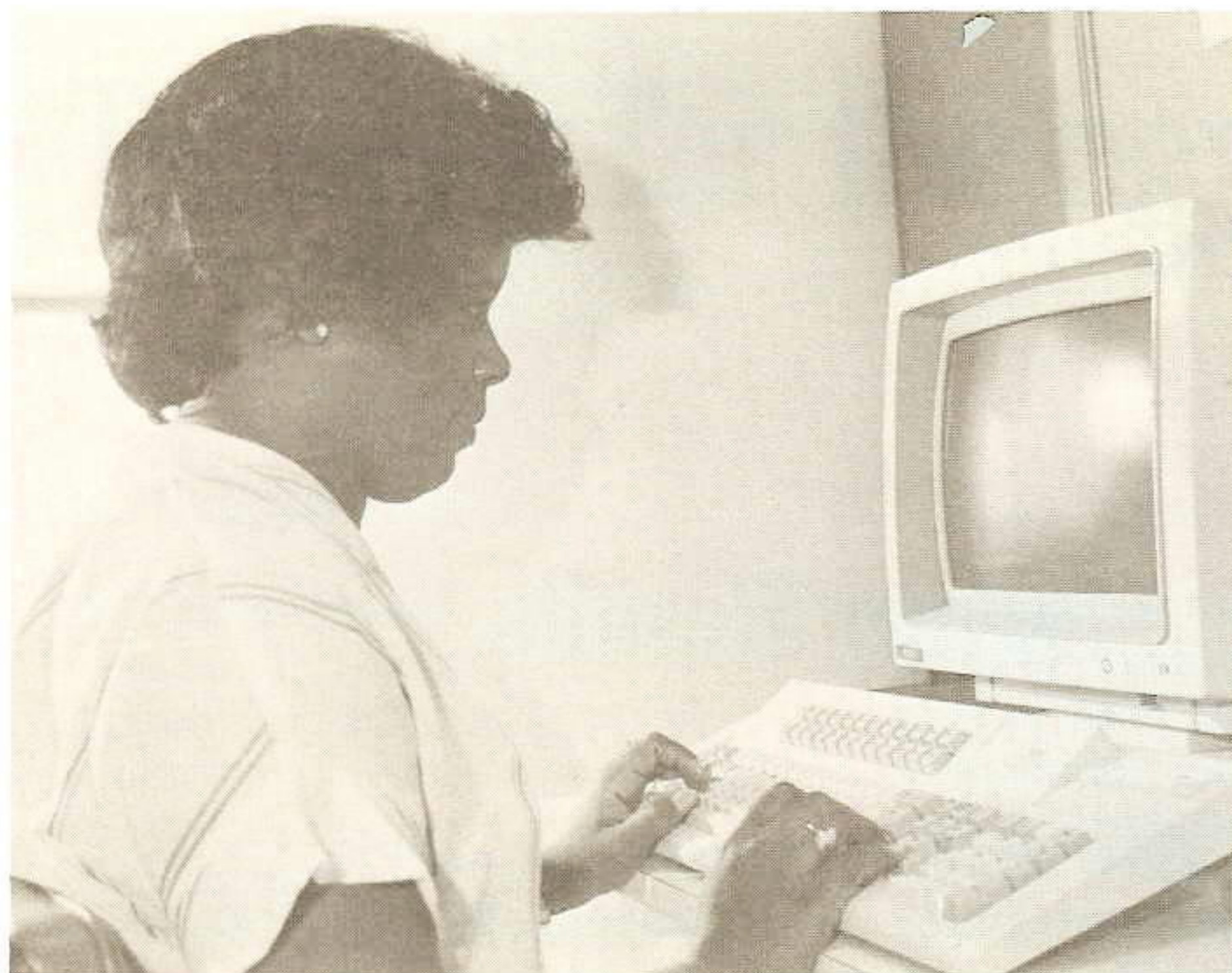
Meanwhile, back in Sulphur, Mullin busies himself with the day-to-day affairs of running a far-flung district office serving 20,000 customers. He and his wife of 35 years, Faye, have made Sulphur their home since 1970, when Mullin was promoted to district superintendent, following stints in Beaumont and Lake Charles.

Bordelon believes the GSU Developer of the Year competition proved what he thought all along — that Mullin and other district superintendents view ensuring the economic health of the communities they serve as an integral part of their jobs.

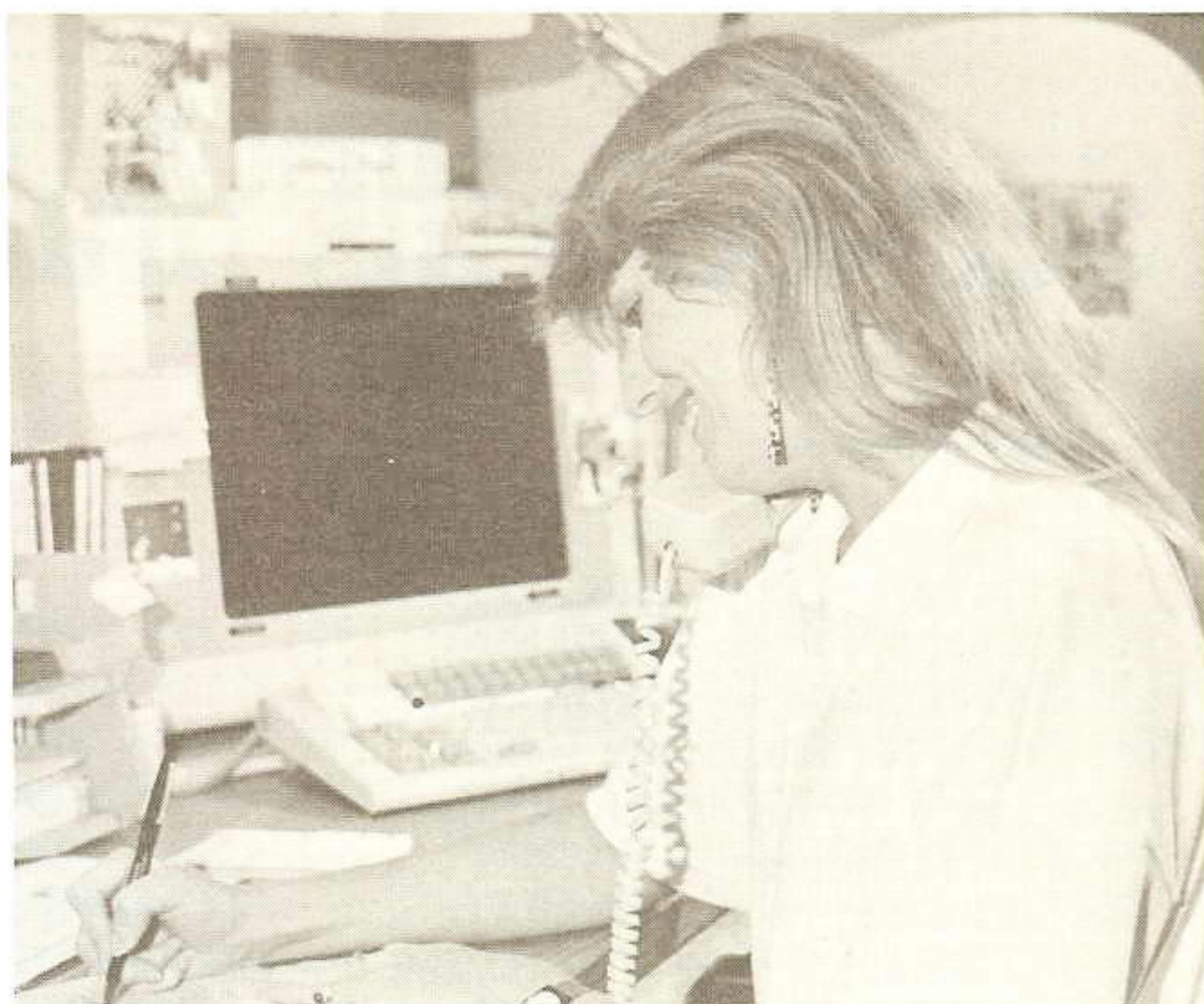


*Board Chairman Paul Murrill (left) praises Gene Mullin for demonstrating leadership in economic development.*





*Accounting is second only to River Bend in terms of computer capacity usage. Isabella Hunter, clerk, helps process the payroll.*



*Misha Pope, a computer operator in Computer Applications' Network Control Center, answers a question from a user. The Center handles about 2,000 calls a month from users across the system.*

## Managing computer capacity

by Robert Adams

Almost anyone would probably agree that the computer plays an integral part in GSU's daily business operations. In fact, the company currently has one terminal for every six employees, up from one for every 70 employees in 1970.

GSU's computer capacity can be classified as large, according to Tony Gabrielle, vice president computer applications. As a comparison, a medium classification could go to a bank such as First City, he says.

But the current financial condition of the company brought about Project Save Cash, which has resulted in a corporate goal to cut expenses. One of the components of the cost-cutting goal is to manage computer capacity usage to eliminate the need for new capacity prior to January 1988.

"We are committed to making that goal," says Gabrielle, "while avoiding degradation of service." Gabrielle says that in 1985, computer usage was increasing by 35 percent per year. A dynamic forecast of computer usage early in 1985 projected that new capacity would be needed by the

fall of that year.

Actually, more direct user involvement in computer usage management began in 1984 with the formation of the Business Information Planning Committee (BIP). This nine-member committee, primarily line officers, was established to provide economical and intelligent user management of computer usage, according to Gabrielle.

"If you do not add new terminals, you don't add work load to the system," says Gabrielle. So a plan was established whereby if someone needed a terminal, someone else had to give one up. Gabrielle says that this system has worked very well — that people have worked together to solve this problem.

Computer usage has peaks of demand just like GSU's electricity load demand, adds Gabrielle, "so we entered into a load management system." The system consisted of allowing heavy users of computer time the flexibility of changing their work hours. They were allowed to come to work earlier or later than the normal business hours in an effort to even out demand on the computer.

In addition, no new software

programs are being added to the computer. Also, the number of computer users at one time is limited, again in an effort to keep up the quality of usage.

These measures have been successful in cutting down the computer usage. The current dynamic forecast indicates the need for additional computer capacity by April of 1987. "Presently, we're making progress. If you go back, we were out of capacity by the fall of 1985. We made it through 1985, all of 1986 is clear and we look OK for at least a quarter of the way through 1987," says Gabrielle. "We still have more to go to maintain the same level of service," he adds. However, the company is committed to the goal and degradation of service is the last step which could be taken to meet it, he says.

Gabrielle asks the help of all computer users to meet this goal. "They can help by thinking which procedures they can defer into the hours before 8 a.m., during lunch and after 5 p.m.," he says. However, the authority to change a person's work hours to lessen computer demand rests with his or her supervisor and BIP executive sponsor, he adds.



## Storm repairs:

# Service wins praise

by Mike Rodgers

**P**eople were genuinely impressed with the efforts GSU employees made to get the lights back on after Hurricane Bonnie," says David White, administrator-Texas communications. White was reflecting on the results of a survey conducted for Gulf States while the effects of the storm were still being felt.

The hurricane slammed into Sabine Pass in the early morning hours of June 26. On the following Tuesday, 256 residents in the Southeast Texas counties of Jefferson, Hardin and Orange responded to a telephone poll on the quality of GSU service.

To the question, "What is your overall opinion of Gulf States? Would you say it is very good, good, poor or very poor?" 82.3 percent responded that their opinions were either "very good" or "good." Kim McMurray, administrator-communications development, noted a dramatic change. "Only one month earlier, in May, our polling revealed that just over 67 percent of those queried rated the company in the top two categories. A 15-percent jump in one month is remarkable, and the 82.3 percent positive rating is the third highest in our polling history."

The public opinion of GSU normally drops during the summer months, a time of peak usage when monthly bills increase. Both White and McMurray say that this sudden rise speaks well of employees who worked hard to get customer power restored. They also see the positive results as proof that customer appreciation of GSU's product and its importance has increased.

Participants in the survey were asked to rate GSU in several possible categories on most questions. The scientifically-selected sampling of 256 persons is considered statistically reliable. Some of the other questions and results follow:

## Survey Results

**How would you rate the service you get from Gulf States? Would you say it is very good, good, poor or very poor?**

	Percent
Very good	28.4
Good	61.1
Don't know/Won't say	3.3
Poor	5.5
Very Poor	1.1

**From your own experience or from what you have heard or read, how would you rate Gulf States in getting the electricity back on? Would you rate it very good, good, poor or very poor?**

Very good	34.0
Good	51.8
Don't know/Won't say	3.1
Poor	9.8
Very poor	1.4

**Was the electricity off during the day, at night, or both?**

Day	30.1
Night	4.1
Both	58.9
Don't know/Won't say	1.2
Not available	5.6

**About how long was the electricity off?**

Less than 1 hour	3.5
1-3 hours	6.8
4-6 hours	10.4
7-9 hours	8.0
10-12 hours	7.7
13-15 hours	4.3
16 and more	51.0
Don't know/Won't say	2.6
Not available	5.6



# Training for the next storm

by Mike Rodgers

Although Bonnie was only a class one hurricane, she demonstrated the ability of even a minimal storm to cause damage and keep line crews working for days on repairs. Downed lines were the biggest headache Bonnie left behind, but not all power restoration requires the services of a line crew. Such tasks as patrolling and assessing damage, escorting contract crews and opening and closing cutouts (switches used to interrupt current) can be performed by other employees.

"In this class you will learn a lot about safety," Tommy Elliott, training representative, told a group of employees taking Service Restoration Training. This course, now in its second year, trains GSU personnel with little or no T&D background to help line crews with some of those post-hurricane duties. For the first time, the course is being offered to system employees. "They will be a big help whenever we have more work than our T&D crews can handle," says Elliott,

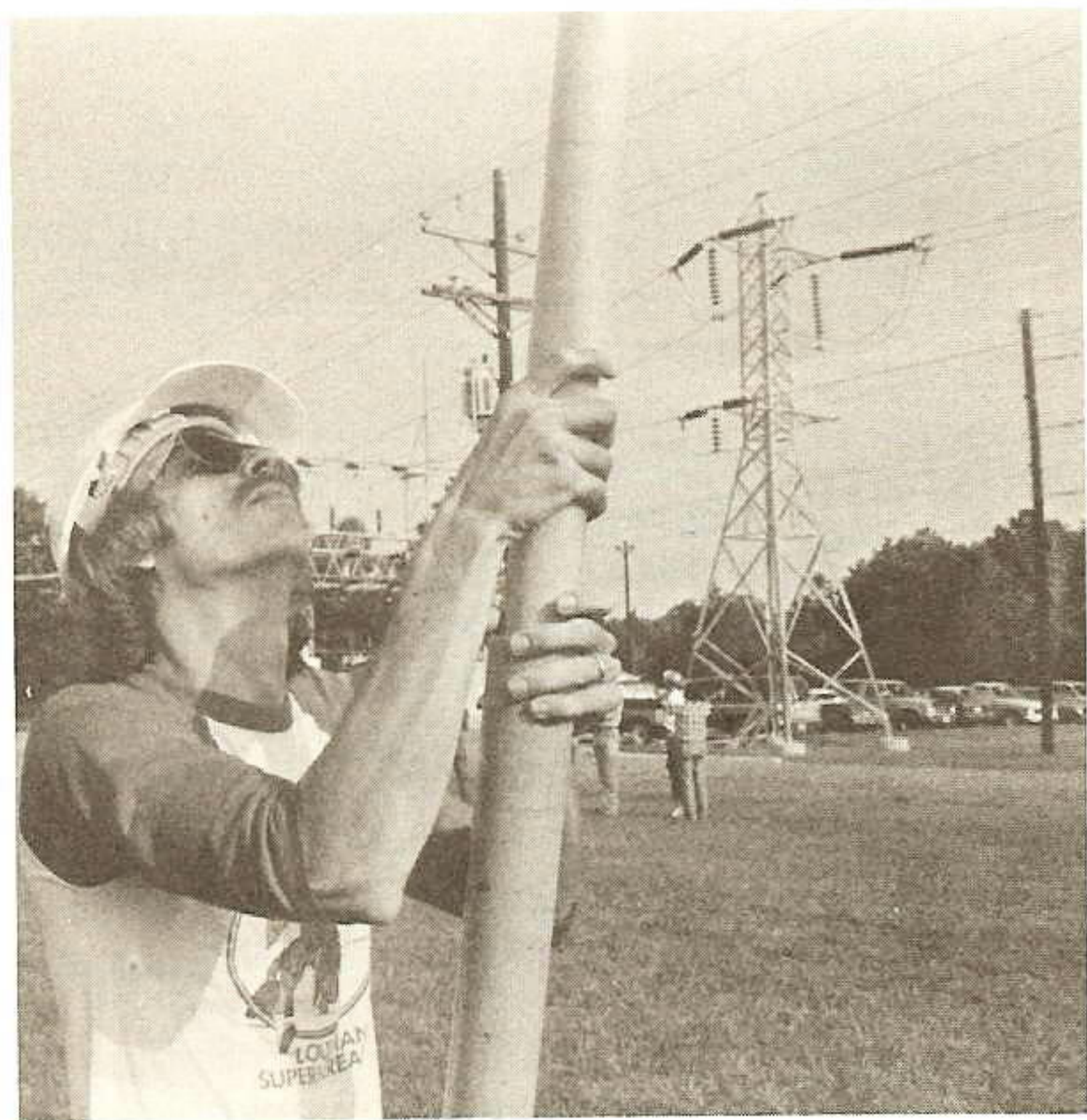
emphasizing that they won't set poles or work on lines. A big part of their training is damage assessment; looking at a situation and determining such things as the size of pole required, the type of wire needed and whether or not a bucket truck will be necessary. They also become familiar with switching and tagging procedures.

Elliott stresses that their assistance can be very valuable, especially in serving as escorts for contract crews unfamiliar with GSU work rules. "One of our employees will stay with each contract crew, making certain that proper procedures and work rules are followed. This frees up a T&D crew to do other work." Communications can also be a big problem after severe weather. GSU trucks operate on several different radio frequencies and may need an escort to relay information to and from the dispatcher.

Some things can't be taught in a classroom setting, so employees find themselves in the yard of

the Helbig Training Center in north Beaumont, listening as an instructor demonstrates the proper way to handle a hotstick, a telescoping fiberglass pole used to do repair work where bucket trucks aren't necessary. Les Jones, senior engineering assistant, served as one of the instructors in the summer classes. He notes, "For someone who hasn't handled a hotstick before, it's a completely new experience. In actual situations it may be rainy with the wind blowing and tree limbs in the way. Besides, your arms get tired." Mark Clift, senior draftsman, acknowledged the truth of Jones' remarks. "Getting the hotstick way up there takes a lot of work."

Elliott says it is only a coincidence that these classes were held after Hurricane Bonnie. "They were on the schedule for months," he says. "Anyway, we don't look on this training as coming *after* Bonnie so much as it comes *before* the next hurricane."



Bernard Stott, training representative, (above) shows employees how to use a hotstick. (left) Mark Clift, senior draftsman, practices using a hotstick to work on a pole.



# Hurricane Bonnie repairs rate b

In the days after Hurricane Bonnie pushed through Southeast Texas, many GSU residential customers, businesses and area municipalities sent cards, wrote letters or penned brief notes on their monthly statements thanking Gulf States employees for the hard work and long hours spent restoring service. *Plain Talks* reprints a sampling of these expressions of gratitude:

## Customers say thanks

Gulf States Utilities  
Beaumont, Texas

Dear Sir:

I, for one, would like to thank you for all the long hours and hard work you have all put in since the storm.

Don't think it wasn't recognized and appreciated by so many of us, because it was.

Where would we be without you? God bless you and your families for the sacrifices you made to get service returned to our homes as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,  
Bonnie Ginsel  
Fannett

Gulf States Utilities  
Port Arthur, Texas

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your good service and hard work during and after Hurricane Bonnie. We appreciate your untiring efforts.  
Sincerely,  
The Poals

Gulf States Utilities  
Beaumont, Texas

Dear Sir:

I can't express my thanks any better than this:



Photo by Ray Cre

Last Tuesday, around 9 a.m., driving toward Orange, I passed a convoy of blue and white service trucks returning home. I felt like saluting those tired and weary men and women for having done so great a job so well.

Thank you,  
Mrs. Evelyn D. Shull

Gulf States Utilities  
Beaumont, Texas

Gentlemen:

We are residents of Pinewood, and we received our power about 4:30 Sunday evening. We would like to convey our thanks and gratitude to all the local Gulf States employees and to the line crews who came in from other areas to help during this emergency.

We realize a prodigious effort was required to get service back to all your customers who lost power during Hurricane Bonnie

and we are grateful for everyone's efforts on our behalf.

Sincerely,  
Jim and Shirley Nauss

Wayne Sullins  
Gulf States Utilities  
Beaumont, Texas

Dear Mr. Sullins,

Thanks so much for getting our power restored so quickly. I really appreciate your fast and courteous service. You and your staff are to be commended for a job well done in such a difficult situation. I hope everyone in our community will know now that GSU is a tremendous asset to our area. Keep up the good work.

Thanks again,  
Sam Giglio Jr.

**Editor's note:** Wayne Sullins is operating superintendent in Beaumont Division.



# g 'Thanks!' from customers

Gulf States Utilities  
Beaumont, Texas

Dear Sir:

Thank you very much for your promptness in getting power restored to our area after the storm. We all appreciate your diligence.

Sincerely,  
Raymond Courts

Gulf States Utilities  
Beaumont, Texas

Dear Sir:

Just a note of thank you for working hard and restoring our power after that bad storm. Keep up the good work.

Have a nice day,  
Linda Bowers

Ronnie Carlin  
Gulf States Utilities  
Port Arthur, Texas

Dear Ron:

Thanks for your great help during the storm.

**Editor's note:** Ronnie Carlin is supervisor-division accounting in Port Arthur.

## Businesses say thanks

Dr. Paul Murrill  
Gulf States Utilities  
Beaumont, Texas

Dear Paul:

On behalf of the Sunbelt Hotels and the Beaumont Hilton, I want to express our appreciation for

your company's immediate response to our power outage during Hurricane Bonnie. Ms. Janet Thomas handled our situation in a calm, efficient manner, keeping our hotel continuously informed as to when power would be restored. I want to thank Jim Davidson, Gene Tillery, Wayne Sullins and Janet Thomas for their efforts to bring our hotel up quickly.

Your employees performed well under a difficult situation. They certainly made our guests feel comfortable and welcomed...

Thank you again for employees doing more than just their jobs, really caring about their customers.

Thomas Harwell  
General Manager,  
Beaumont Hilton

Jim Lusk  
Gulf States Utilities  
Beaumont, Texas

Dear Jim:

I find an ordinary "thank you" entirely inadequate to tell you how much Borden appreciates your rapid response to our problems on June 26, 1986. Correcting these as Gulf States did on such a timely basis enabled Borden to continue keeping our products at an acceptable temperature.

I want you to know I am deeply grateful for the quick attention you gave us.

Sincerely,  
Paul Clymore  
Maintenance Engineer  
Borden, Inc.

**Editor's note:** Jim Lusk is a service supervisor in Beaumont Division.

## Cities say thanks

Ron McKenzie  
Gulf States Utilities  
Port Arthur, Texas

Dear Mr. McKenzie:

On behalf of the Groves City Council I would like to commend you on the prompt and efficient manner in which power outages were handled during the recent storm. The swift response to losses of power in the Groves area by your employees enabled many businesses and residences to return to their daily routines after only a short period.

It is reassuring to know that during any kind of inclement weather, even hurricanes, dependable Gulf States Utilities employees are on the job. You and your employees are to be complimented.

Sincerely,  
Sylvester Moore  
Mayor

Gulf States Utilities  
Beaumont, Texas

Dear Sir:

On behalf of our residents, let me thank you for your thoughtful and generous delivery of dry ice to our community. Constable Joe Faggard assures me that the residents of High Island, Gilchrist and Port Bolivar also all shared in the bounty. Public utilities tell their customers how much they care, but you backed it with a considerate deed.

J. Dudley Brown,  
President  
Crystal Beach Volunteer Fire Dept.



# Kelly sees progress, change

by Mike Rodgers

**H**urricane cleanup is a real mess," says Ernest Kelly, assistant line supervisor in Denham Springs, La. "There is so much work to do and so little rest for everyone involved." Kelly should know. A veteran of several major storms such as hurricanes Audrey and Alicia, he was called on in June to supervise 65 persons from Baton Rouge Division who assisted in the Hurricane Bonnie repairs in the Texas service area. Displaying a thank-you card signed by several Port Arthur families and sent to the crews, he spoke of the pride he felt for the all-out effort it took to restore service.

When Kelly retires in October, he will take along 41 years worth of experience and many memories of his work at GSU. "I started back in 1945 at the age of 17 as a helper in the line department making 68 cents an hour," Kelly recalls. He started in the Baton Rouge line department, eventually advancing to lineman-1st class. Kelly worked in the service department in Baton Rouge for several years and in Zachary for two years. In 1958, he transferred to his hometown of Denham Springs.

Kelly believes that staying in the town where he was born and reared was an advantage. "I'm pretty familiar with everyone here. They know me and I know most of them," he says. Good customer service is a top priority to Kelly, who says that most of the time, his crews give same-day response for turn-ons. "The customer comes first. We take pride in serving them well," he stresses.

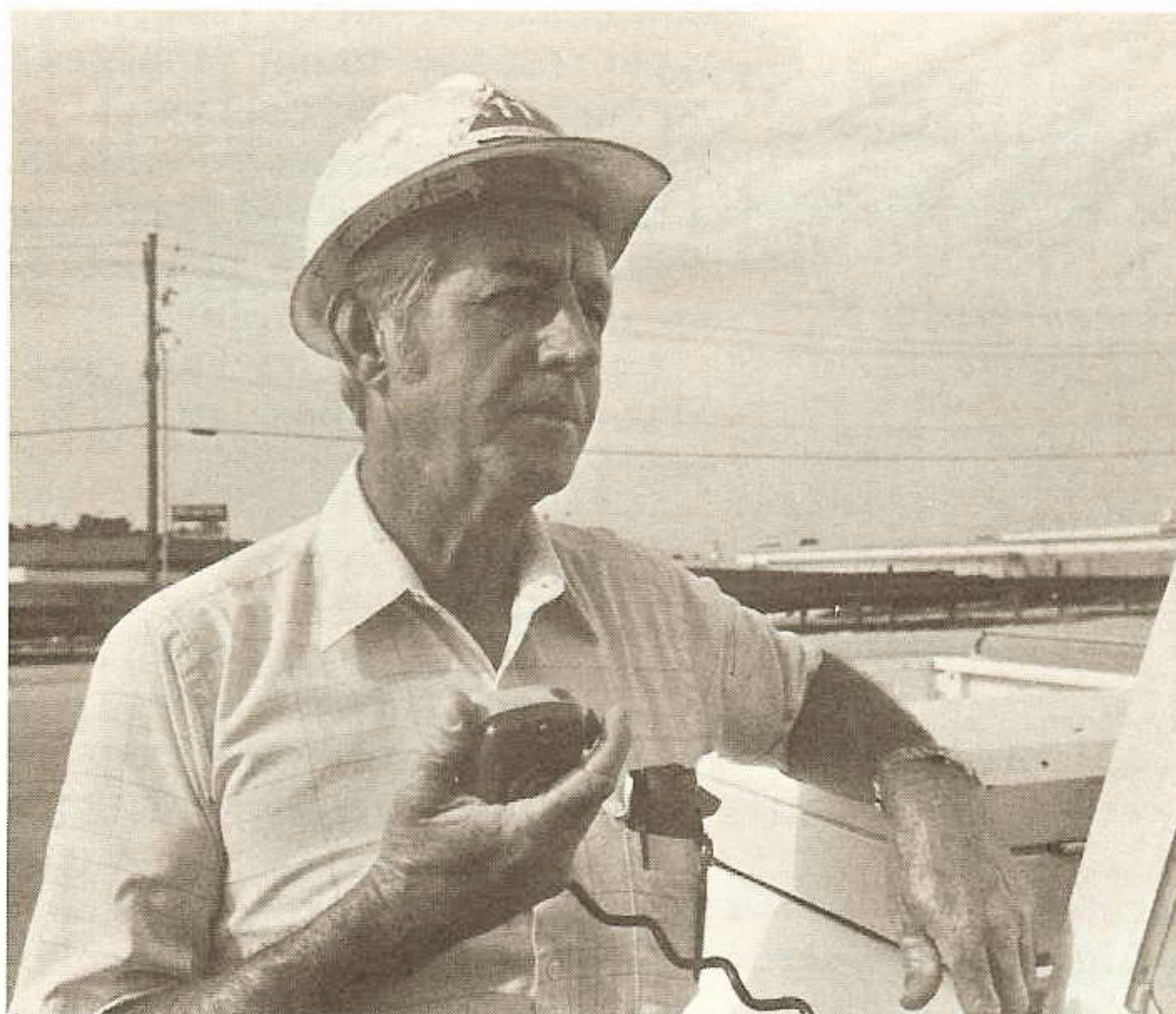
GSU has changed a great deal in Kelly's 41 years. He notes that in the earlier days three line crews served the entire Baton Rouge Division. "Now," he says, "I've got more than that in Denham Springs alone." The

advent of bucket trucks was another milestone for him. He remembers when all work had to be done from the pole using hotsticks, and says with satisfaction that bucket trucks made the work go much faster.

An outdoorsman, Kelly is happiest when his job takes him from behind the desk out into the field. He likes to remind people that he worked his way up in GSU in outdoor jobs and he prizes

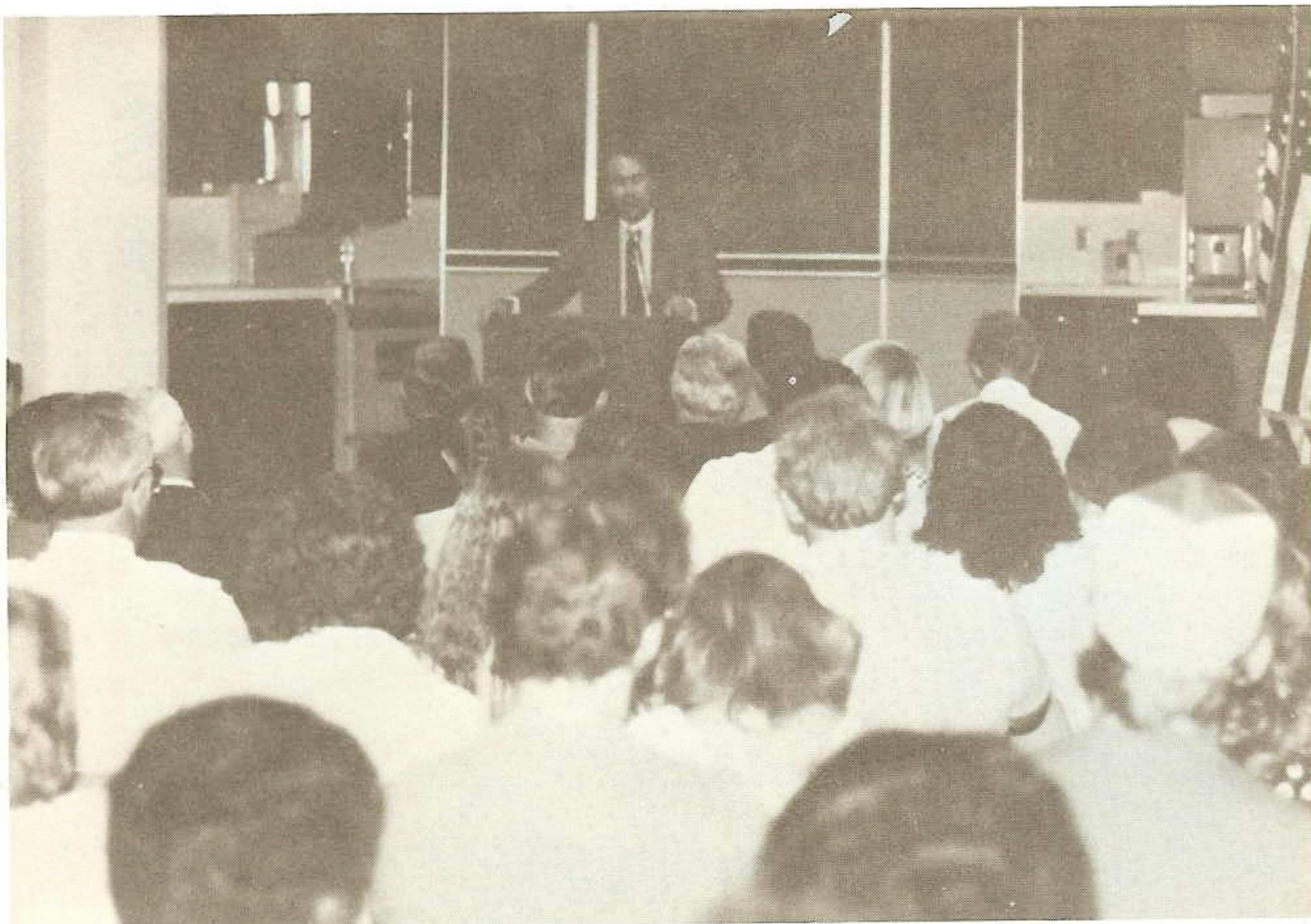
the flexibility his responsibilities permit.

The walls of Kelly's office, with mounted trophies of past fishing expeditions, are a clue to his love of the outdoors. Do they reveal anything about his retirement plans? "Yes," he says with a gleam in his eye. "We have a fishing camp on Bayou Pigeon. I don't like to travel, but I do a lot of bass fishing. I'm looking forward to that."



(Above)  
Ernest Kelly  
(front row,  
left) in 1945 at  
age 17. (Left)  
Kelly radios a  
message to a  
crew working  
in the field.





*Dr. Linn Draper speaks to Western Division employees in Conroe.*

Photo by Bo Harrison

# Draper talks to employees

by Betty Gavora

In 28 meetings with employees during July and August, GSU President Linn Draper discussed the state of the company and future challenges.

From a trailer outside Winnie, Texas, to beautiful Lewis Creek Station overlooking the lakes of the Conroe area to service centers, power plants and offices in all five divisions. From the corporate headquarters at Edison Plaza to the new River Bend nuclear plant to some of the oldest GSU locations, the message was the same.

The company's financial situation is serious. Gulf States must have timely help on several fronts:

- Necessary rate increases in Louisiana and Texas to begin to pay for the construction of River Bend, built to ensure that GSU's customers would have an uninterrupted supply of electricity from a diverse fuel mix.
- Relief from contract agreements to purchase

power from The Southern Company, since the prices for that coal-based power are higher than prevailing market prices and the contract stipulates good faith negotiations if either party wants to increase or reduce the amount of capacity purchased.

- A delayed payment arrangement on the approximately \$600 million buyback of the Cajun Electric Cooperative's 30 percent of power from River Bend.

Dr. Draper recounted that the company's costs of doing business have already been cut to the bare minimum, the common stock dividend has been eliminated and the company is no longer able to borrow money at favorable rates. He emphasized that a large infusion of cash is necessary for the company to continue to operate.

During 1987 it is projected that, without rate increases, the company will take in \$500 million

less than the money it will need to pay operating expenses. While bankruptcy has been mentioned in the media as a possible alternative, Draper stated that the company would do everything in its power to avoid bankruptcy.

"There is no great precision to the date, but sometime between Thanksgiving of 1986 and George Washington's Birthday next year, the situation will be extremely critical," said Draper. "By that time we will need positive action by the Texas and Louisiana commissions."

When employees asked what they could do to help, Draper mentioned several things:

- Continue to provide good service to our customers. Nothing can take the place of good service.
- Explain the seriousness of the company's situation to family, friends and neighbors so they will understand why rate increases in Texas and Louisiana are necessary.
- Through communications with the public and elected officials, help them to understand how important it is for Gulf States to receive fair treatment in its rate cases.

After answering questions from employees and listening to their thoughts, Draper took the opportunity to visit with employees on the job and to see the work they are accomplishing. Pictures of some of these visits follow.



*Sabine Station*



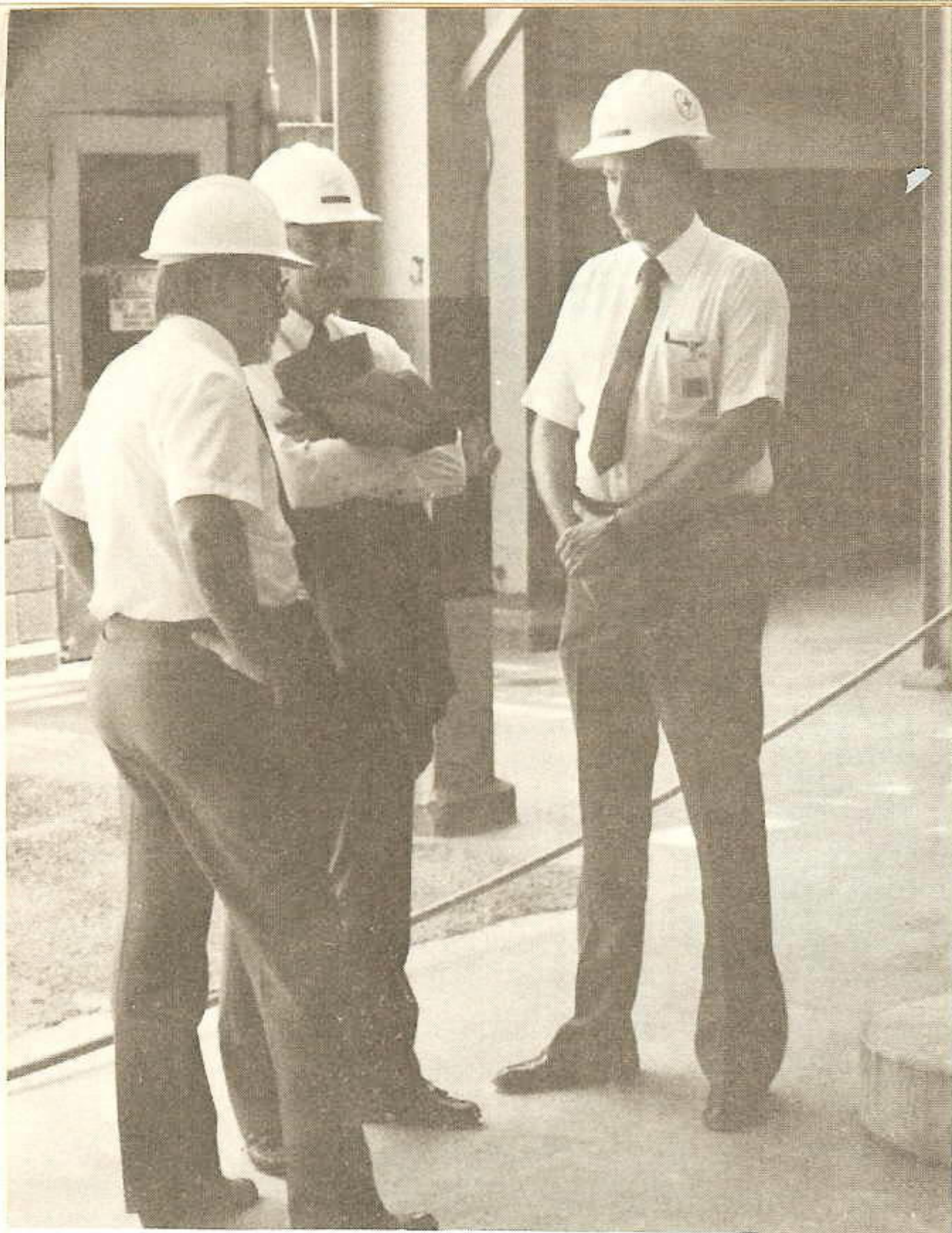


Photo by Scott Heiman

*Jimmie Smith, Draper and Mike Denton at Neches Station.*

# Draper visits

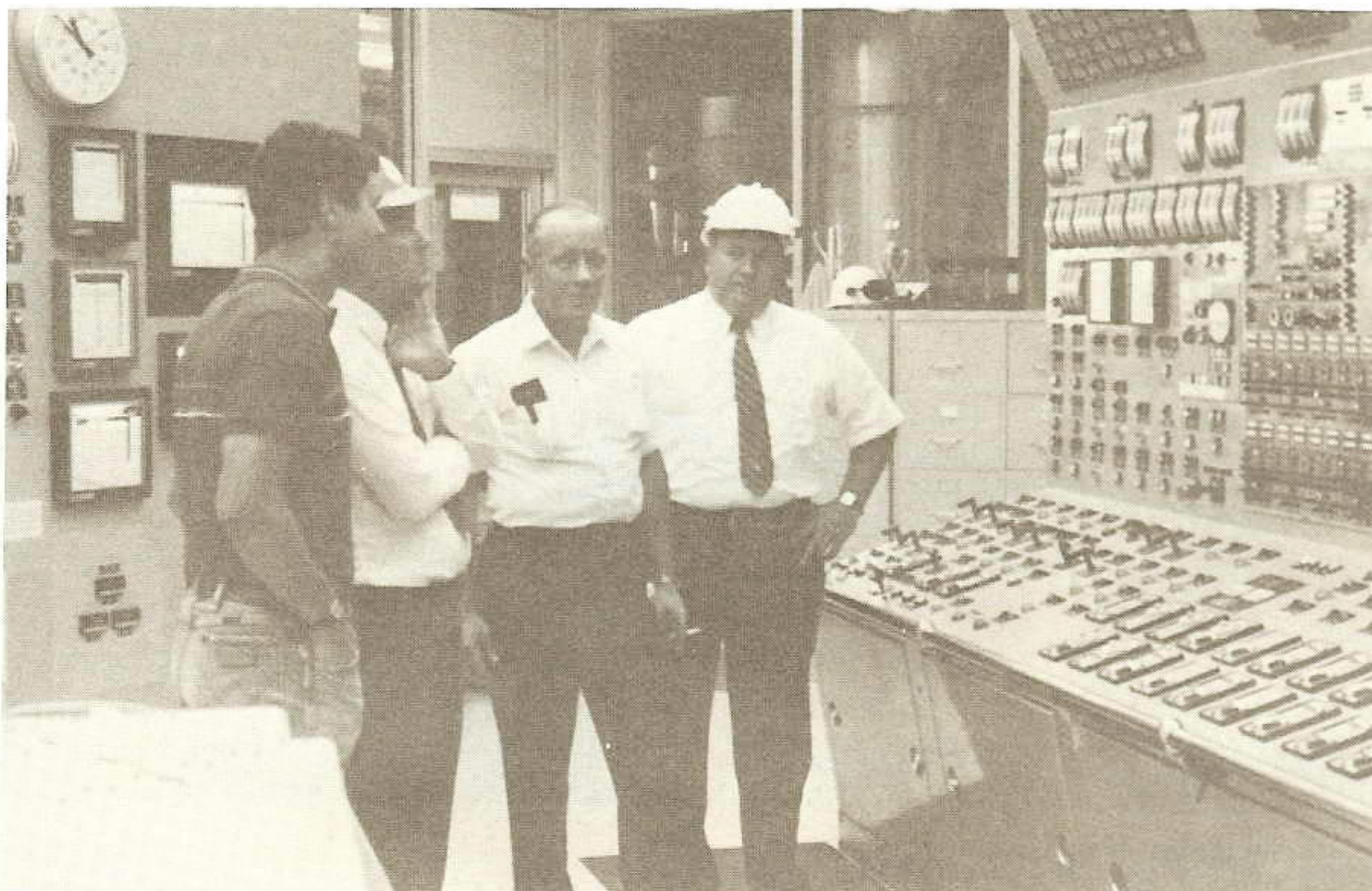


Photo by Darlene Faures

*From left, Charles Goehring, Draper, Jewel Merchant and Wes Schattner in the No. 4 control room at Sabine Station.*

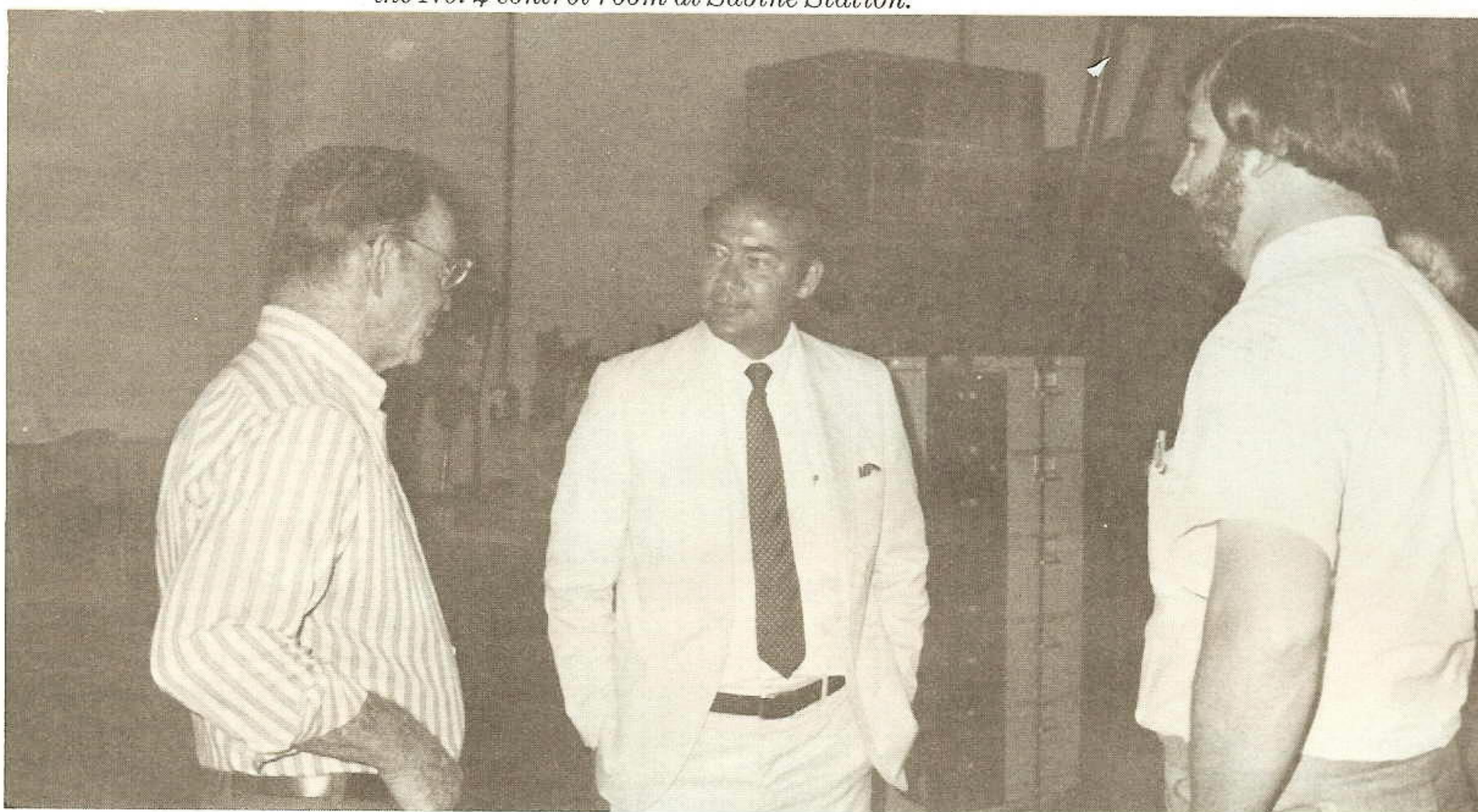


Photo by Edith Patterson

*From left, Bob Derby, Draper and David Wade in Lake Charles.*

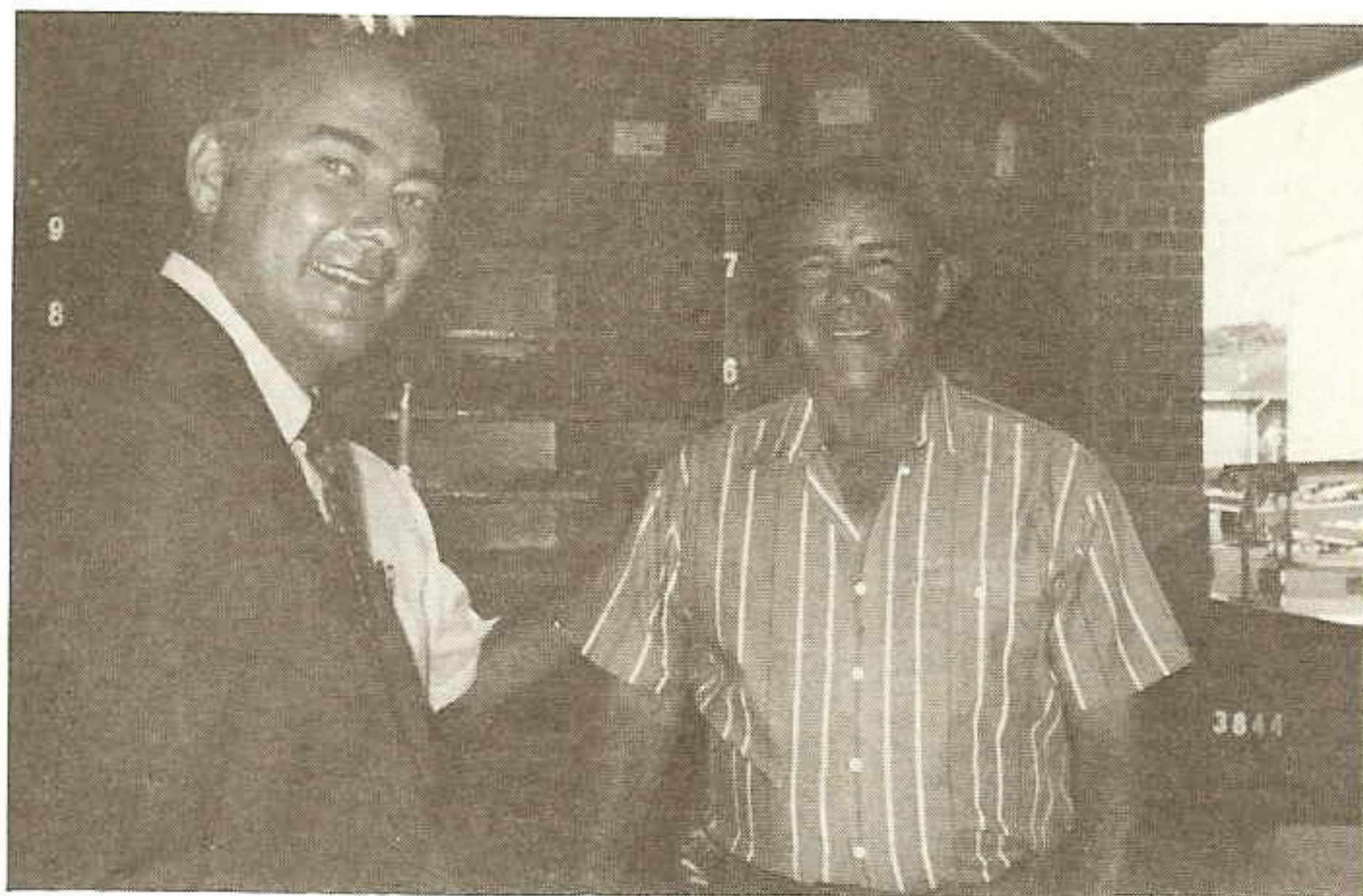


Photo by Helen Kennedy

*Draper and Leroy Boutin in Lafayette*

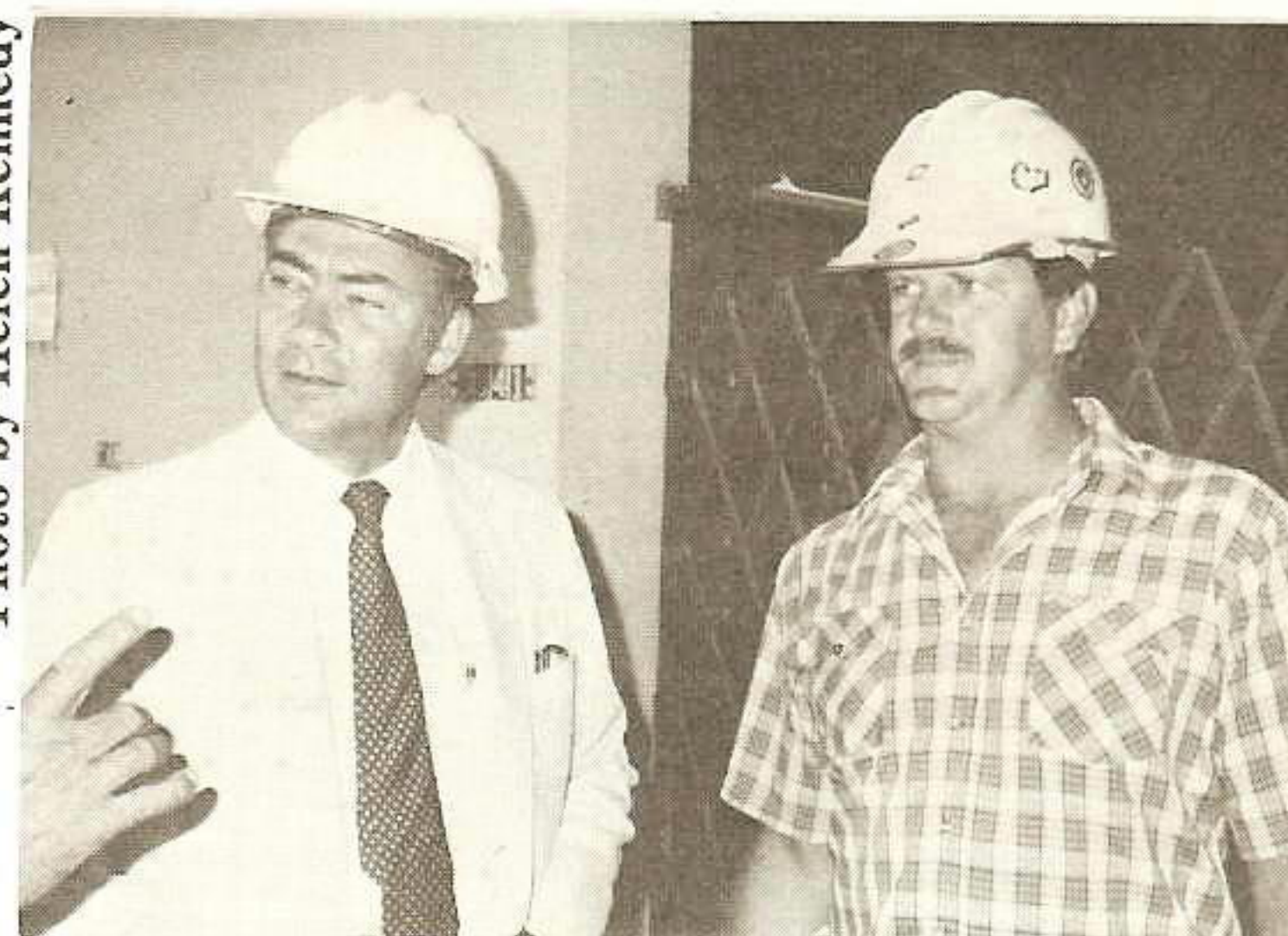


Photo by Edith Patterson

*Draper and C.P. Trahan in Lake Charles.*



# with employees



*From left, Joe Simpson, Larry Woodall and Draper in Edison Plaza.*

Photo by Cheryl Crawford



*Draper and Keith Browning at Nelson Coal.*



Photo by Bo Harrison

*From left, Draper, Blaine Page and D.W. Rutherford at Lewis Creek.*

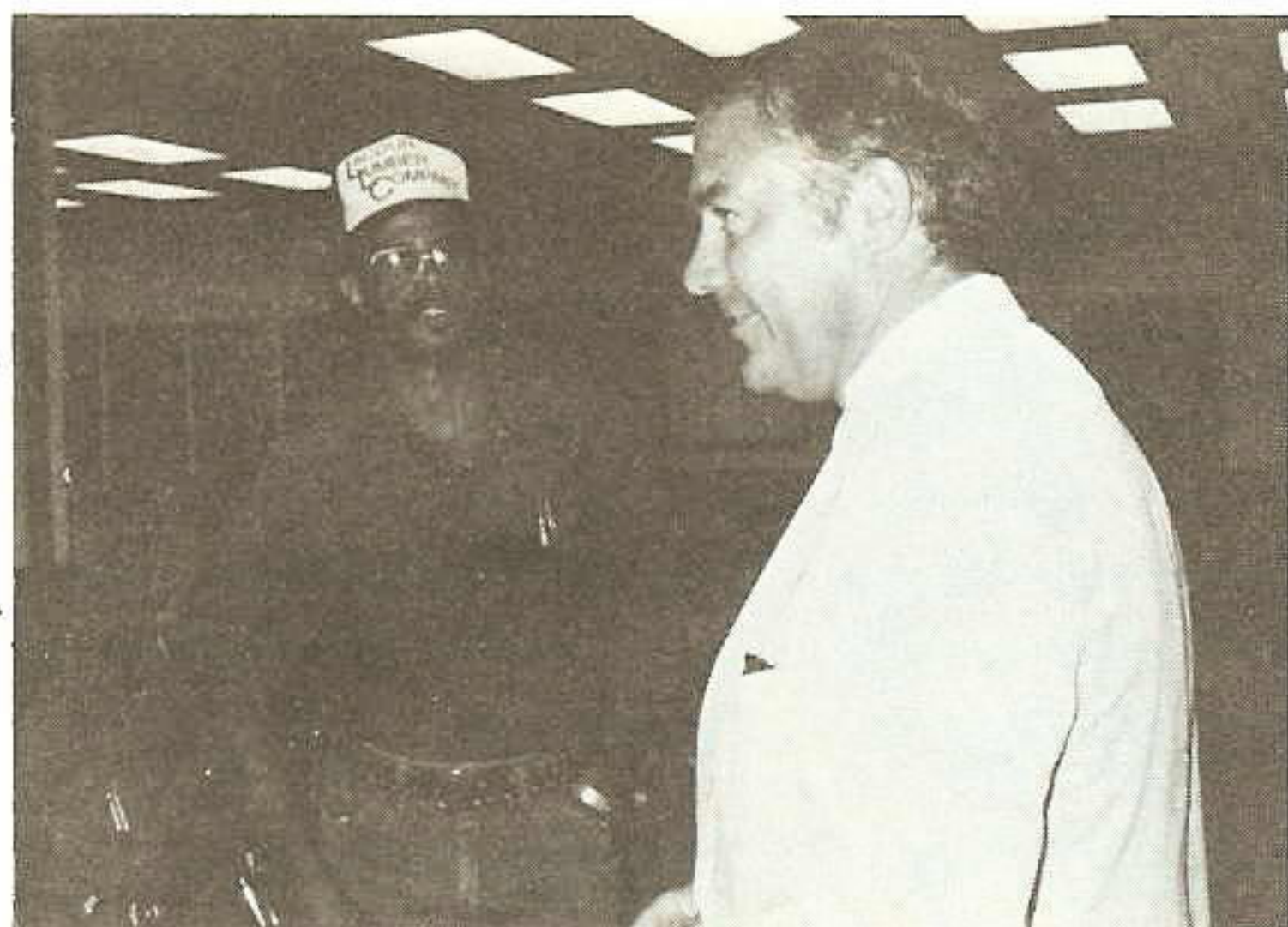


Photo by Lem Gravelle

*Eugene Terry (left) and Draper in Jennings.*



Photo by Connie Herford

*Draper and Jean Hebert at Nelson Gas and Oil.*



# What makes a good supervisor?



Glenda Pruett



Larry Ainsworth



Susan Buford



Doris Andress

Contributing to this article were *Plain Talks'* correspondents Sherry Overbeck, D.W. Rutherford, Helen Kennedy, Barbara Broussard, Carol Payne and Monica Thomas.

**Glenda Pruett, customer contact clerk, Port Arthur:** "A good supervisor is knowledgeable in the area he or she supervises. He or she is concerned for his or her employees and is consistent and fair in making decisions."

**Larry Ainsworth, consumer service representative, Lafayette:** "A good supervisor is one who knows how to motivate people to work to achieve their maximum potential for the betterment of themselves and the company...A good supervisor knows how to delegate authority and responsibility. This encourages employees

to take the initiative and to be creative."

**Susan Buford, stenographer-senior, Lake Charles:** "A good supervisor sees when an employee needs assistance and acts accordingly. He or she welcomes the idea that an employee wants to learn and get ahead in the company."

**Doris Andress, customer contact clerk, Trinity:** "A good supervisor is respected by fellow employees. He or she can help in solving problems and answering questions that might arise."

**Thomas White, senior engineering assistant, Huntsville:** "A good supervisor knows that it is important to have an open line of communication which includes listening as well as giving directions. He or she has a good

working relationship with employees, so they feel comfortable asking questions. He or she also has professional knowledge of the job."

**Blaine D. Page, control operations foreman, Lewis Creek Station:** "A good supervisor is knowledgeable about and interested in his or her job. He or she encourages development within the department through instructing and delegating responsibility whenever possible. A good supervisor knows and can explain company goals and procedures in order to maintain high standards and discipline."

**Martin L. Wilson, plant engineer, Lewis Creek Station:** "The most important facet of supervising people is to remain objective. This must be accom-



Thomas White



Blaine Page



Martin Wilson



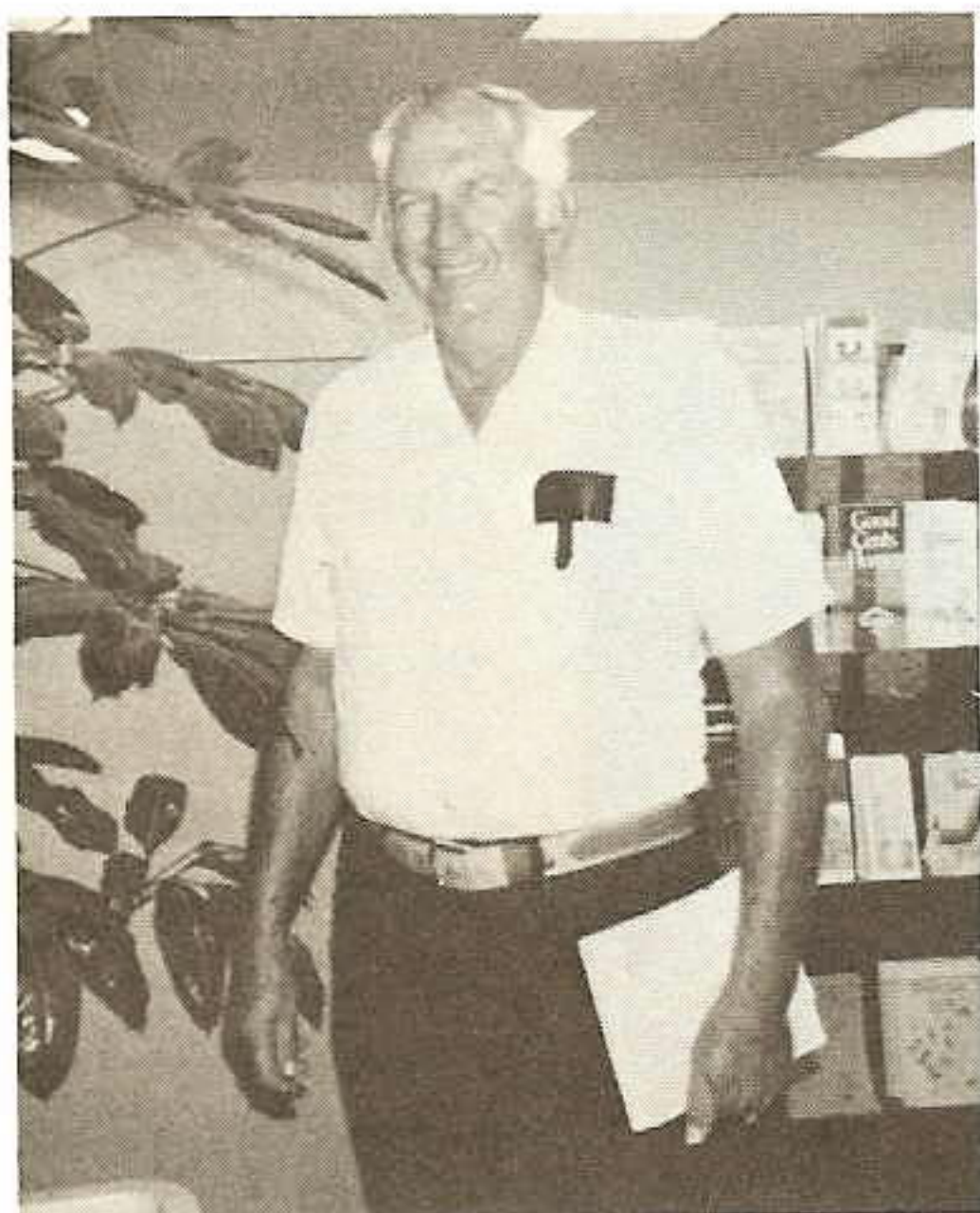
Larry Grisham



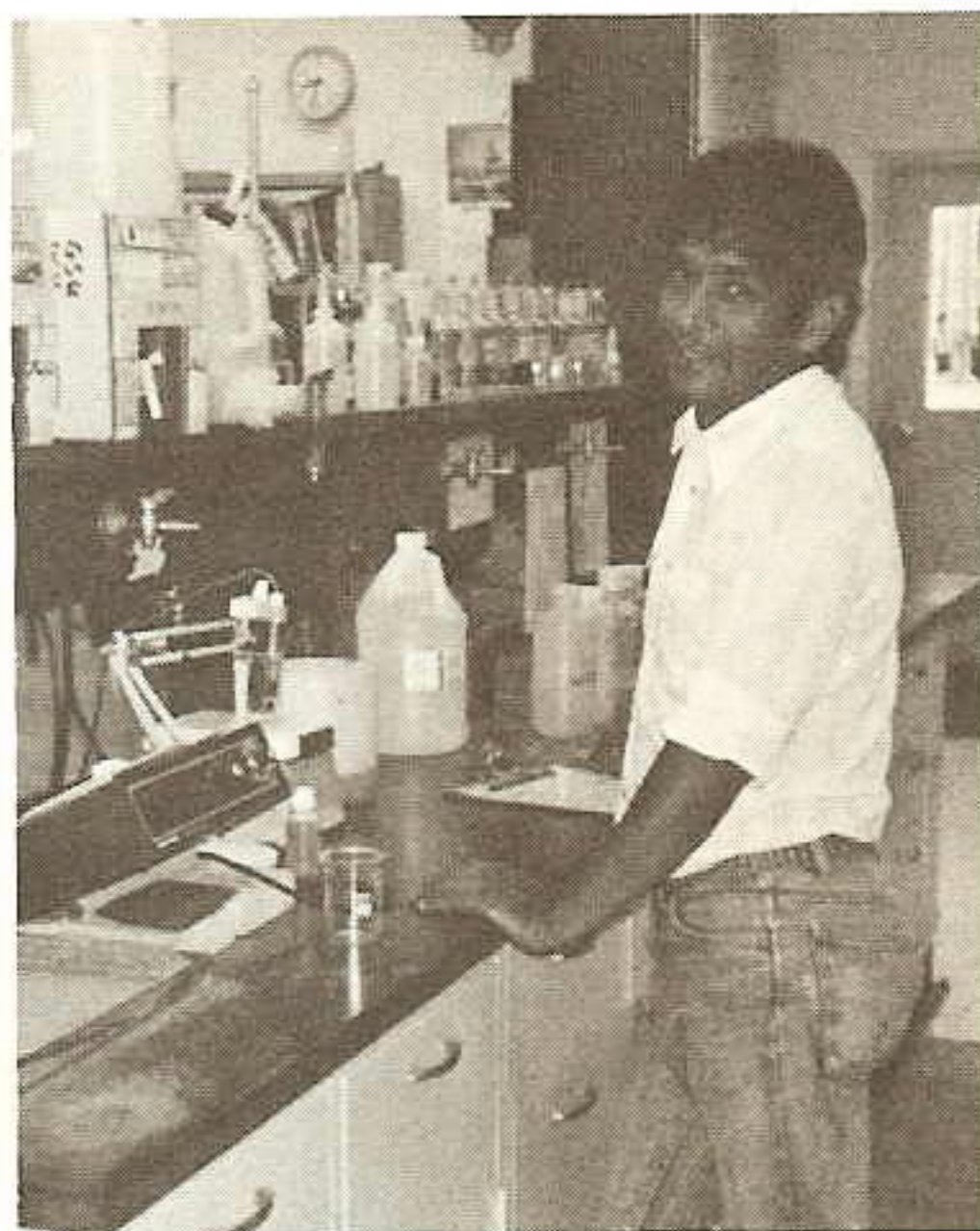
# What makes a good employee?



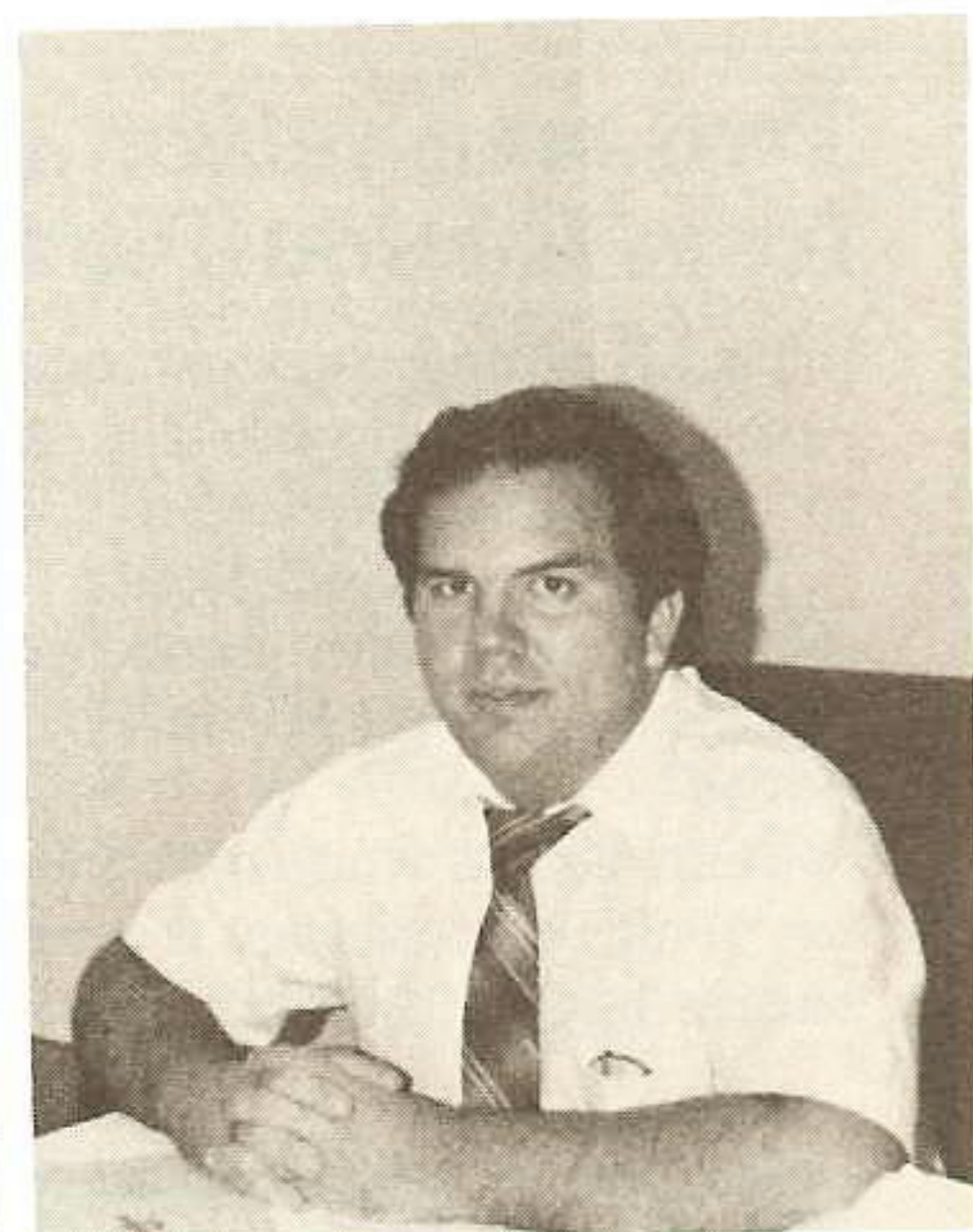
*Jerry McHam*



*Robert Boenker*



*John Villarreal*



*Don Perio*

plished while projecting a real concern for the employees' success on the job."

**Larry Grisham, utility foreman, Huntsville:** "A good employee is dedicated to the job, to Gulf States Utilities and to safety."

**Jerry McHam, district superintendent, The Woodlands:** "A good employee thinks and does, takes pride in his or her work and is satisfied with nothing less than the best. A good supervisor puts himself or herself in the place of the employee and treats that employee the way he or she would like to be treated."

**Robert Boenker, assistant line supervisor, The Woodlands:** A good employee is "open-minded and accepts challenges and changes."

**John Villarreal, instrument technician-1st class, Lewis Creek Station:** "A good employee takes pride in a job well done and in Gulf States."

**F. Don Perio, supervisor-Credit and Collections, Port Arthur:** "A good employee is a person who can work within the parameters of his or her job and do everything possible to help the customer."

**Barry Murchison, supervisor-Customer Services, Port Arthur:** "A good employee is an individual who always strives for excellence in every aspect of his or her job."

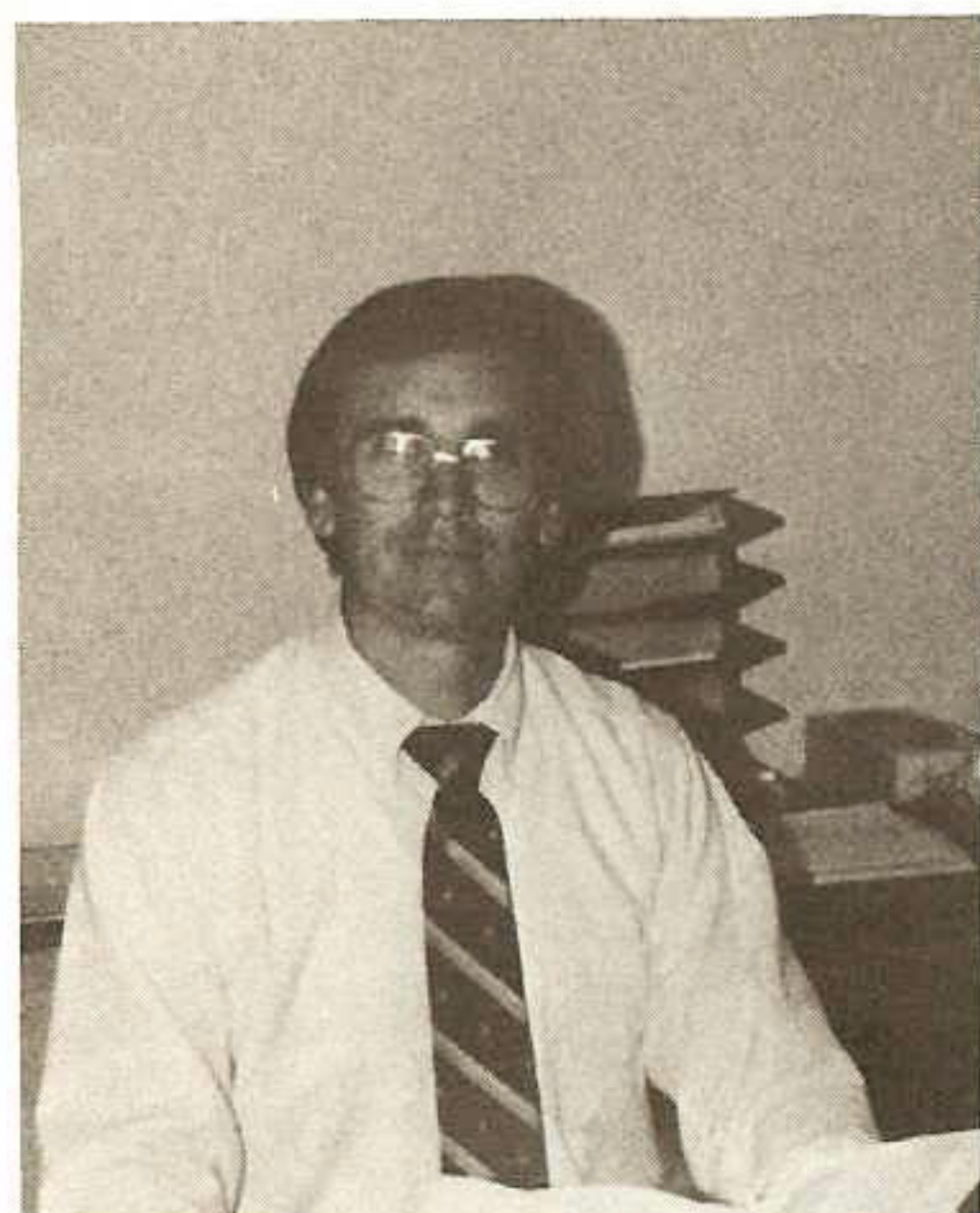
**Bobby Wooderson, equipment operator, Lewis Creek Station:** "A good employee is a conscientious person with a desire to do a job to the best of his or her ability. A good employee follows instruc-

tions and carries out tasks efficiently and safely without strict supervision in a manner that instills trust and respect from peers, as well as from supervisors."

**Virgil L. Fuselier, supervisor-Marketing & Consumer Services, Lafayette:**

"One of the most important qualities an employee can have is a good attitude toward the performance of his or her job. With the proper attitude, the employee will be responsive to learning how to get the job done, be mindful of providing the best possible customer service and assure that our company will be well represented in the community."

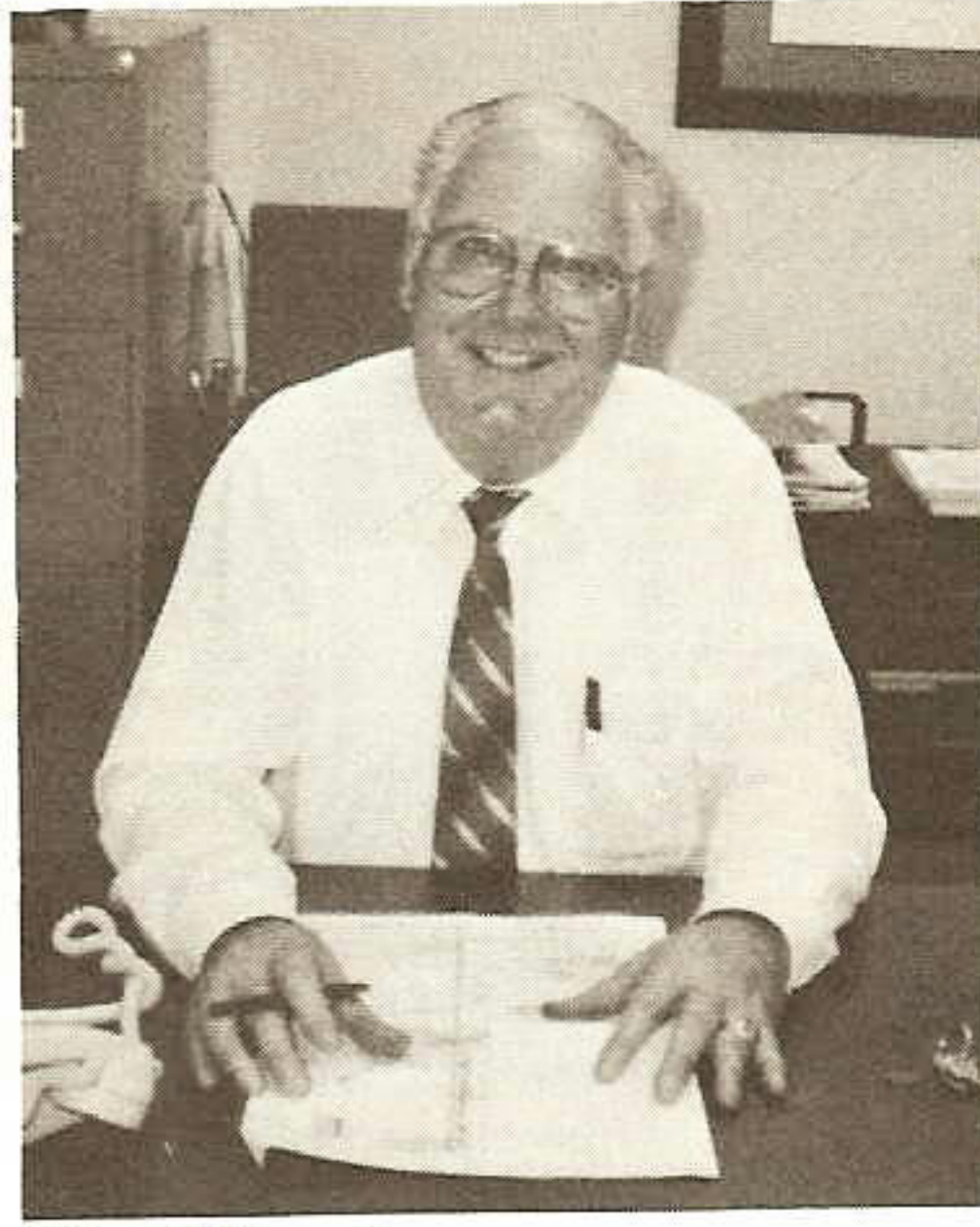
**Joe Nettles, service foreman, Huntsville:** "A good employee enjoys...and is dedicated to the company."



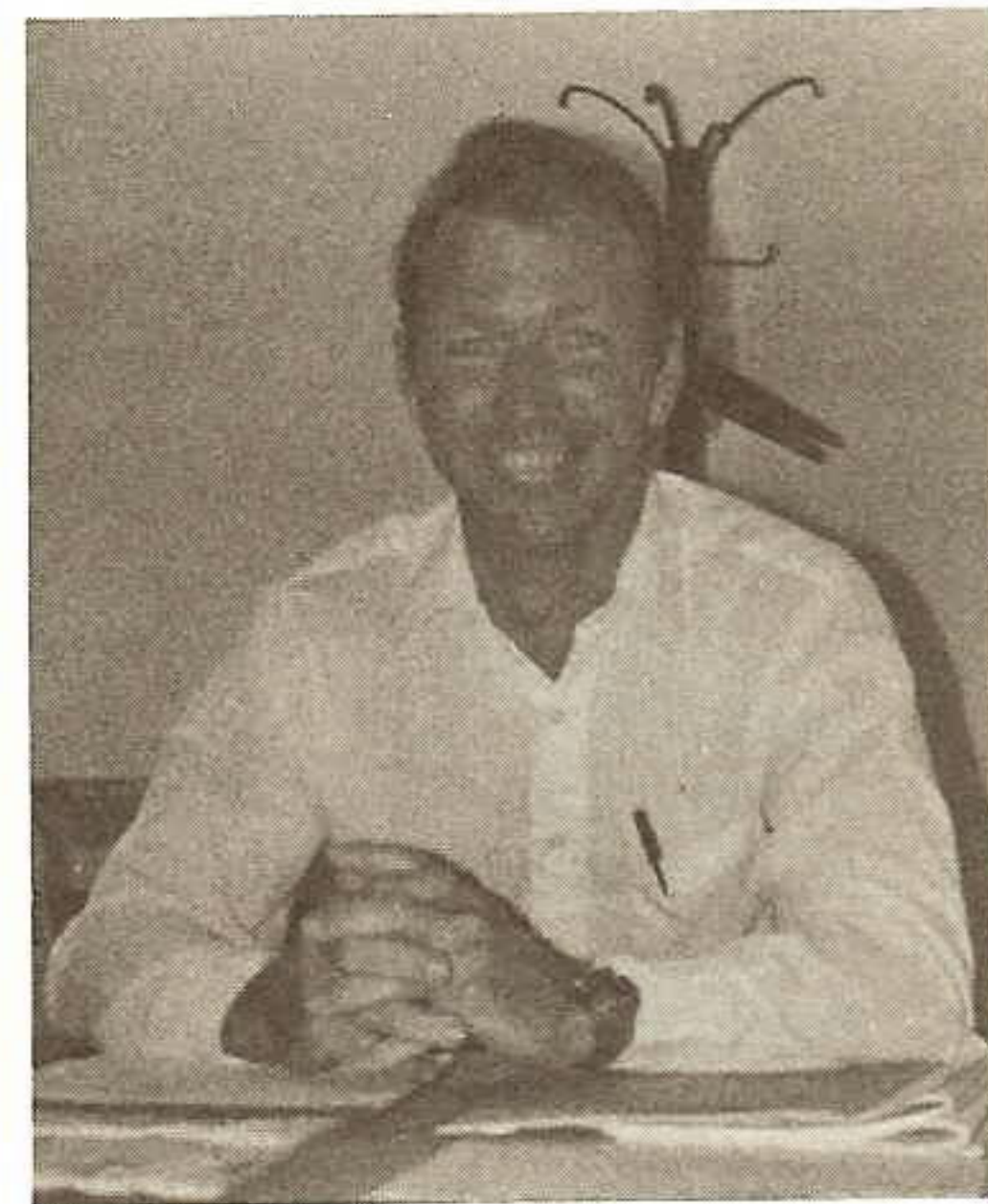
*Barry Murchison*



*Bobby Wooderson*



*Virgil Fuselier*



*Joe Nettles*



## Two men retire from Edison Plaza

Two Building Services employees retired May 1, prompting co-workers to host several parties in their honor.

They were Gerald Dean, building and grounds maintenance superintendent, and Joseph H. Sanco, special utility worker.

Dean began work at GSU on Nov. 11, 1949, while Sanco's company career began May 4, 1959.



Jack Worthy (left), Gerald Dean



Joseph Sanco

## Sideliners visit Grand Ole Opry

Beaumont Sideliners toured parts of Tennessee and Georgia in mid-May, reports *Plain Talks*' correspondent Mrs. H.G. Zahn Jr.

Highlights of the trip included a trip to the Jack Daniels' Distillery in Lynchburg, Tenn., a tour of The Hermitage and a showboat ride down the Cumberland River. The group attended an afternoon performance of the Grand Ole Opry, and some of the travelers attended a performance of the Broadway show "Music, Music, Music."

Mrs. Zahn said the Sideliners also toured Twitty City and toured a plant owned by the Roper Corp. in Lafayette, Ga.

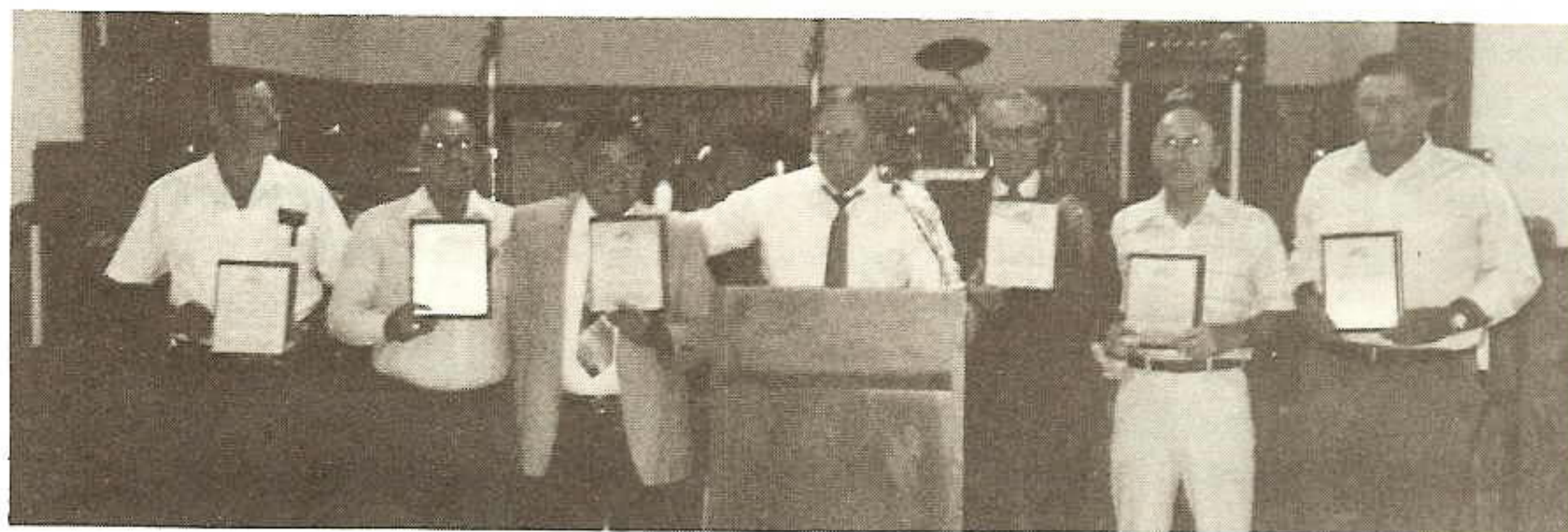


The Holiday Inn in Meridian, Miss., put out the welcome sign for the Beaumont Sideliners in mid-May as the group traveled to Tennessee.

## Lafayette honors eight retirees

Employees at the Lafayette office honored eight retiring colleagues this summer, reports *Plain Talks* correspondent Helen Kennedy. At a party on June 27, V.J. Olivier, meterman-1st class; Harry Guidry, substation foreman; James Daigle, service supervisor; Joseph "Peter" Gallet, utility man; Doug Provost, inspector-contract crews, and Shelton Trahan, relay foreman, were awarded safety plaques and received farewell gifts.

On July 11, two more Lafayette retirees were recognized for their service to GSU. Henry Legnon, storeroom supervisor, and Albert "Lou" Louviere, substation mechanic-1st class, were each given a watch and a plaque.



From left, V.J. Olivier, Harry Guidry, James Daigle, Lafayette Superintendent George Irvin, Joseph Gallet, Doug Provost and Shelton Trahan.



Albert Louviere (left) and Terry Huval, assistant general substation supervisor.



Henry Legnon (left) and George Irvin.



## Friends honor six retirees

Louisiana Station employees saluted six retirees at a very special party June 19. The honored guests included Eddie Kopp, planning supervisor; Steve Oliphint, electrician-1st class; Ferris Parent, master repairman, and William Barrow, master repairman. Two other retirees, Charlie Lucas, master electrician, and Ed Vallet, shift supervisor, were unable to attend the celebration.



From left, Eddie Kopp, Steve Oliphint, Ferris Parent and William Barrow.

## Deaths listed

*Plain Talks* has been notified of the deaths of the following retirees:

- Lillian M. Hansen, 79, of Baton Rouge died April 14. At the time of her retirement, she was a clerk in the Gas Department in Baton Rouge.

- Sheldon P. Fruge, 55, of Lake Charles died June 30. He is survived by his wife, Rita V. Fruge. At the time of his retirement, he was a general maintenance supervisor in Lake Charles.

- Edgar G. Mathis Jr., 76, of Conroe died June 30. At the time of his retirement, he was superintendent in Sour Lake.

# March of Dimes effort recognized

GSU's efforts on behalf of the March of Dimes did not go unrecognized, Travis Harrington, staff accountant-II and the Gulf States coordinator for the 1986 campaign, tells *Plain Talks*. The T-shirts designed for GSU participants by Robbie Zeringue, senior engineering assistant in Baton Rouge, won a regional first-place award for Best Graphic Design-Teamwalk '86.

The award was a pleasant surprise for Zeringue, who says he was "...trying to capture something of the heritage of both Texas and Louisiana as well as the March of Dimes to reflect the pride felt by GSU employees."

Harrington also notes that the March of Dimes presented GSU with a plaque for outstanding service; providing thirst-quenching water for everyone who took part in Teamwalk '86.

Over \$34,000 was contributed by Gulf States employees this year. A breakdown by division follows:

by Gulf States employees this year. A breakdown by division follows:

Beaumont—Edison Plaza	\$ 8,446.45
Beaumont Division	3,647.97
Port Arthur Division	2,218.65
Western Division	2,266.56
Baton Rouge Division	15,160.76
Lake Charles Division	2,791.80
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$34,532.19</b>



Robbie Zeringue wears one of the T-shirts with his design.



Travis Harrington holds two trophies awarded by the March of Dimes.



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*From left: J.B. Flanagan, Charles Glass, Dr. Linn Draper and Wayne Sullins.*

## Bird rescue noted

At a recent employee communications meeting at the Beaumont Service Center, Dr. Linn Draper congratulated line department employees for their work repairing damage from Hurricane Bonnie. Charles Glass, vice president-Texas operations, singled out J.B. Flanagan, serviceman-1st class, for his special effort to rescue a trapped bird. A letter in the July 24, 1986 edition of the *Beaumont Enterprise* commending the action follows:

### Gulf States cares

On a recent hot, humid evening, a small bird, a purple martin, became enmeshed by some fishing line in Gulf States wires, and his struggle to free himself was heartbreaking.

My first appeal was to my husband, to no avail — he (the bird) was too high and entangled in some very high voltage wires.

A frantic call to the Gulf States lights out number brought an immediate response.

First, a pickup truck arrived and once he (the driver) determined that the bird was still alive, he brought in a "bucket truck."

The sight of two husky linemen exhibiting such tenderness in freeing one of God's creatures made me, through my prayers, think of Matt. 10:29, "and not one sparrow shall fall to the ground without your Father," and today it was not His will, and a grateful, happy little bird winged his way over the rooftops into the gathering dusk.

As they were leaving, I could not help but notice the familiar orange and black "Neighborhood Radio Watch" emblems on the back of both trucks, and it occurred to me that they not only watch, they act, and they care.

Thank you so very much, Gulf States.

Betty Parsons