

New Local Industry Employs Handicapped

Toy Making Firm Turns Out 1,200 Units Each Day

By DAN DAVIES
Mail Tribune Staff Writer

Christmas preparations have begun already in Medford at one of southern Oregon's newest industries. On Tuesday, July 29, Handicapped Industries, Inc., began production of a toy it calls the "New X-Plorer Rocket."

The toy manufacturing firm, drawing its name from the fact that handicapped persons are employed to assemble and package its product, is turning out about 1,200 units a day, according to President Eric A. Allen.

Nine physically handicapped persons are presently employed to put together the colorful package, which was designed by Dic Walsh of Medford, vice president and treasurer of the company.

Assembly Line
The assembly line at the plant, 827 West Jackson st., consists of a large U-shaped table around which the employees work. As you walk into the room you would be unlikely to notice that the workers include two blind men and a deaf-mute woman.

"Whenever I feel blue and down in the dumps," Allen said, "I go back and cheer myself up by listening to those people joking and laughing."

Allen said he came to Medford about a year ago with the idea of establishing a toy manufacturing company. Last February he and Walsh joined forces and on July 21 they incorporated. "The idea of employing handicapped persons came after I was put on an American Legion committee for the handicapped," he reported.

Two Showrooms
The firm leases 2,800 square feet of floor space at its new home, Allen said. In addition to the assembly room there are two showrooms, a lunchroom, and additional space for anticipated future expansion.

One of the display rooms will be used for exhibiting the rocket toy and a number of other items including things produced at Camp White, the president said. The other will house Halliday company, Inc., Palisades Park, N. J., products.

Allen readily admits that the Halliday company made his firm possible. He said that they have agreed to take all of the toys his firm produces for the next several years. "They approached us earlier to see if we could guarantee to produce one million of our rocket toys for this Christmas," he stated, "but of course we just couldn't manage that."

By Christmas time, Allen said he expects to have 30 or 40 employees, the majority of whom will be physically handicapped.

Purchased in Medford
Everything that goes into the toy is purchased in Medford except for the balloons which are made to order in Illinois, Allen said.

The assembled package includes three colorful balloon rockets, a wooden plunger used as a releasing trigger, and a 10½ by 13¼ inch cardboard with a cut-out for a launching pad backed by a piece of spring steel. All of this is enclosed in a transparent wrapping.

To operate, the rocket balloon is inflated and placed on the launching pad. When the trigger is depressed, the rocket fires into the sky, propelled by escaping air. The balloons can be used repeatedly, Allen said.

John Ragsdale, 55-year-old Trail native and now a resident of Eagle Point, typifies the employees in many ways. Ragsdale has been blind since he was six years old. He will be remembered by many residents as the man who operated a cigarette and candy stand in the courthouse for a number of years.

Likes Type of Work
Ragsdale said that he had been working for the government for about 10 years when he started looking for something else this spring. He heard about the formation of Handicapped Industries and applied for a job. "This is the type of work I've always liked," he reported. "I like to do a lot of tinkering and work with my hands."

As the present time, he admitted, there isn't too much variety to his job. He works at packaging most of the time although the employees do swap jobs occasionally.

Allen said the nine employees are paid one cent



CARTON ADVERTISING—Mrs. Jeanette Misenheimer, one of nine physically handicapped employees working at Handicapped Industries, Inc., 827 West Jackson st. is silk screening cartons used to ship the firm's toy product in. All materials used by the new company, except the balloon rockets, are purchased in Medford, including the shipping cartons. (Knackstedt Photo)



ASSEMBLY LINE—Sight of the nine handicapped persons employed by Handicapped Industries, Inc., can be seen around the assembly line putting together and packaging the firm's X-Plorer Rocket toy. These people turn out about 1,200 of the toys a day. From the left are Joe Pryor, Medford; Leo Potter, Central Point; John Ragsdale, Eagle Point; Jack Brazier, Ashland; Miss Donna Nelson, Medford; Floyd Elbert, Central Point; and George Poore and Jackie Hunsaker, both of Medford. (Knackstedt Photo)



FINAL INSPECTION—Eric A. Allen (right), president, and Dic Walsh (left), vice president and treasurer of Handicapped Industries, Inc., are shown with Miss Donna Nelson inspecting the X-Plorer Rocket toy made by the firm. The toys are some of the first produced by the company since it went into operation July 29. (Knackstedt Photo)

Ex-Ashland Editor Gets UPI Position

Ashland — A former city editor of the Ashland Daily Tidings, Willard D. (Bill) Eberhart, has been given a news executive assignment in Portland by United Press International.

Eberhart's wife is the former Ernestine Gilstrap of Medford, and he is the brother of Jean Eberhart, local sporting goods store owner.

The new Oregon executive news editor is to be transferred from Montreal, Canada, in September. Before going to Canada six years ago Eberhart held positions in Seattle and Portland with the wire service and was manager of the UP bureau in Honolulu.

The Eberharts have one son, Richie.

apiece for each completed assembly. "They have earned up to \$1.50 per hour each and are getting faster every day."

"These people are the darndest workers in the world," Walsh chimed in. "You just can't get them to stay away from the job."

Handicapped Industries is holding an open house today between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. for persons interested in touring the plant.



PROTESTING INNOCENCE, Marine Capt. Dean Hansberry enters San Diego federal court for trial on charges of embezzling \$63,000 from Camp Pendleton Marine Base. He claims money was taken in armed robbery. With Hansberry is wife, Jean, who staunchly supports him. (AP Photo)

Congressmen Say Admiral Rickover Got Official Snub

By JAMES BAAR
United Press International

Washington — UPI — Incensed congressmen yesterday roundly condemned President Eisenhower's failure to invite Rear Adm. Hyman G. Rickover to White House ceremonies celebrating the historic North Pole exploit of the atomic submarine Nautilus.

The White House insisted it was not a deliberate snub to Rickover, who is known as the "father of the atomic sub." Press Secretary James C. Hagerty said there was a shortage of space in the room where the ceremony was held and hence the guest list had to be restricted.

The explanation failed to convince or pacify key members of the Congressional Atomic Energy committee. Rep. Melvin Price (D-Ill.) pointed out that Rickover has been "sighted repeatedly" by Navy brass and high government officials.

Twice Passed Over
Rickover has been in the ill graces of regular Navy officialdom for some time. He has twice been passed over for promotion. Unless he receives Vice Admiral rank by next year, he must retire automatically.

One Pentagon source claimed that White House advisers made three telephone calls to Navy leaders suggesting the 58-year-old admiral be included on the guest list but that the requests were ignored. The Navy disavowed any responsibility in the matter.

Rickover's absence at the widely publicized White House ceremony where the President pinned the Legion of Merit on the Nautilus skipper, Cmdr. William R. Anderson, was quickly noted.

Space Limitations Blamed
Hagerty said that because of the space limitations, only heads of the top Navy commands were asked to attend.

Price responded: "If this were the first time, I would give them the benefit of the doubt. But the Admiral has been slighted repeatedly. It is amusing to see people taking the bow who had little to do with the creation of the Nautilus."

Rickover incurred the ire of the Navy hierarchy by his overriding zeal on behalf of nuclear submarines. In pressing for the project which resulted in the Nautilus and a fast growing atomic fleet, the scientist-admiral frequently ruffled the feathers of his superiors.

Union to Cooperate With Centennial

Roseburg — UPI — Delegates to the third annual Oregon AFL-CIO convention here directed J. D. McDonald, president, to appoint a committee to cooperate with the Oregon Centennial commission.

The closing session directive issued by the group was made to assure a successful centennial and trade fair.

All union members throughout the state were urged by delegates to support the celebration in Portland.

Delegates also voted to increase the Council's annual student scholarships from \$500 to \$700. A raise in runner-up scholarships from \$100 to \$200 was approved, if finances allow.

Six scholarships are awarded yearly, three of \$500 each and three of \$100 each.

Man Shot While Fixing Breakfast

Vancouver, Wash. — UPI — Clifton Mamerow, 65, of Los Angeles, Calif., was accidentally wounded Thursday as he prepared breakfast for his wife and a companion in the Ridgefield city park, Clark County sheriff's deputies reported.

Officers said Mamerow was shot in the left knee with a .22 caliber rifle.

Two boys, 12 and 14, who had been shooting birds in the vicinity were turned over to juvenile authorities for questioning.

Mamerow was reported in good condition at St. Joseph hospital.

Safety Award Presented To Gold Hill Cement Plant

By MRS. CLYDE KELL
Gold Hill — Employees of the Gold Hill Ideal Cement company plant and Marble Mountain quarry were honored at a Boettcher Safety Award picnic given by the Ideal Cement company Aug. 2 at TouVelle State park.

The picnic was held in recognition for the outstanding safety record achieved by the Gold Hill plant. There were no lost time accidents during 1957, and the local unit had passed its 815th consecutive day without a disabling injury.

The day's activities included a full program of entertainment for children and adults. A roast beef dinner was served at noon. More than 335 attended the picnic, including employees, their families, local Ideal officials and guests, retired employees of the Gold Hill plant and quarry, and several Ideal Cement company executives from Denver, Colo.

The welcome address was given by Frank A. Sutcliffe, manager of the Gold Hill plant, who expressed his gratitude to all who were responsible for the safety record.

Sutcliffe introduced company executives from Denver, who praised the management and men for the record achieved through cooperation in observing safety regulations. One Denver official commented on the good housekeeping he noticed when he visited the cement plant, and was pleased since this is a factor towards establishing good safety habits.

Those from Denver present were Thomas B. Douglas, vice president of operations; Frank Price, industrial relations director; and Ted Johnson, editor of the Ideal Cement Mixer magazine and director of public relations.

Other guests introduced by Sutcliffe were Mayor and Mrs. Ernie Cooper of Gold Hill; E. A. Olsen and Bud Green, accident prevention division, state of Oregon; Ray Murray, sales manager, Oregon division, Portland; E. F. Bollinger, Pacific regional production manager, Palo Alto, Calif.; R. E. Hussey, labor relations manager, Pacific region.

Retired employees of the Gold Hill plant and Marble Mountain quarry were presented by J. Raymond Ritter, plant chemist and safety director, who was chairman of the picnic arrangements. Those present were R. E. Cook, Charles Kell, John Hangas, Carl Boye, Clyde Walker, Bozy Tepovac, S. M. Christensen, Jim Clement, Max Schmidt, Joe Pankey, and Earl Pankey of the cement plant. Those from Marble Mountain were William Marsh and Hose Brown.

The Bureau of Mines Joseph Holmes Award was presented to the men of Marble Mountain quarry for having worked four years without a lost time accident. Price made the presentation to Pat Gallagher, large cat operator at Marble Mountain, which is located near Wilderville in the Grants Pass area.

The State of Oregon Award of Merit was presented to Frank Carter, master mechanic at the cement plant, by Bud Green, Medford, who is representative of the Oregon State Industrial Accident commission. The award was given in recognition of outstanding effort and achievement in the interest of safety.

The Charles Boettcher Safety Award was presented by Douglas. Receiving the award was Alva Cook, chief electrician, in behalf of the employees of the cement plant.

The Boettcher Plaque is the highest safety award ever presented to any unit of the Ideal Cement company chain. To qualify for the Boettcher award, the plant must have completed one calendar year without a lost time accident. To win the plaque permanently a plant must have completed two consecutive years without a lost time accident, Douglas said.

The Boettcher Safety Award is named in memory of the founder of Ideal Cement company, Charles Boettcher, who stressed welfare and safety habits for his employees as far back as 1898 when he founded the original cement plant



RECEIVES AWARD—Alva Cook, chief electrician at the Gold Hill plant of the Ideal Cement company, receives the Charles Boettcher Safety Award on behalf of the plant employees at a recent picnic at TouVelle State park. The award is the highest a company plant can receive from the firm for going one year without a lost time accident. (Ideal Cement Company Photo)

of Ideal in Portland, Colo. The company is now made up of 15 cement plants and three terminals throughout the United States. The local cement plant became a unit of Ideal Cement company in 1952. Since that time many improvements to modernize have been carried out, including new buildings and equipment.

Douglas said the Gold Hill Ideal cement plant is one of eight to receive the Boettcher honor this year. Sutcliffe added that to his knowledge this is the first time in the history of the local plant that such a safety record has existed.

Ritter, who also is safety director, said he is proud of his fellow workers for having observed rules and achieved the awards.

Ritter expressed his appreciation to all who served actively on the picnic committee. They were Jim Lindsay, Pat Gallagher, Si Fleming, Neal Smith, Bill Day, Clyde Brown, Mrs. Ann Denker, Frank Carter, Wilmer Bailey, Sam Jones, Cleo Gilchrist, Al Finke, Clarence Huntley, Alva Cook, Bob Vincent, Lawrence Smith, Donald Ferguson and Leonard Gascon.

Guests of Ideal officials attending from out of town were J. O. Kingslien, Ideal salesman, southern Oregon; Joe Murdock, chief chemist, Ideal Cement company, Redwood City, Calif.; Mike Reiley, Ideal salesman, northern Oregon; and Jack Kershaw, owner of K Lines, Inc., Coos Bay; John Forrest, district 2 coun-

cil representative of the Cement Lime and Gypsum Workers of America, who came from Seattle, Wash.

Vancouver Man Killed In Crash

Vancouver, Wash. — UPI — Henry Harding, 62, of Vancouver, died Friday afternoon when his car crashed into a concrete abutment at 33rd and Freeway.

Vancouver city police said that the cause of death was undetermined.

Clark County Assistant Coroner John C. Egon ordered an autopsy.

Police voiced the opinion that Harding may have died of a heart attack before the crash. Officers said no skid marks were visible. Harding was reported to have a bad heart, they said.

WRONG BAG

New York — UPI — Bookkeeper Sylvia Youngerman and a woman companion stopped at a bank Friday and picked up a \$2,000 payroll and then dropped into a nearby restaurant to buy a container of coffee. As they were about to enter the building of Miss Youngerman's employer, a daring payroll bandit grabbed the paper bag she was carrying and fled. He got the coffee.



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