



## Resins quality control teams slashing service complaints

In most cases, quality control assurance ends when a product leaves the manufacturing site. But two new DPMC resins teams, composed of members from maintenance, operations and management, have taken quality control a step further — into the marketplace.

"In this day and age, we have to depend on the quality of our service as well as the quality of our product to be competitive," said George Gutierrez, Resins Distribution process manager. "We have become more concerned about a product once it leaves our gate."

Gutierrez is a member of the Service Quality Assurance Team (SQUAT), formed about

six months ago to battle the increasing number of service-oriented complaints received by the resins department. SQUAT not only polices customer complaints, but serves as the "action arm" of the resins Quality Assurance Team (QUAT), created several years ago to implement policies and guidelines in the handling and transportation of products.

Leonard Alpert, Resins Superintendent, realized the need for the two quality assurance teams. "Shell is number one in the epoxy resin market," he pointed out. "If we stumble in quality with our buyers for any reason, we'll lose that market. Our customer service plays a big

part in our success," he added.

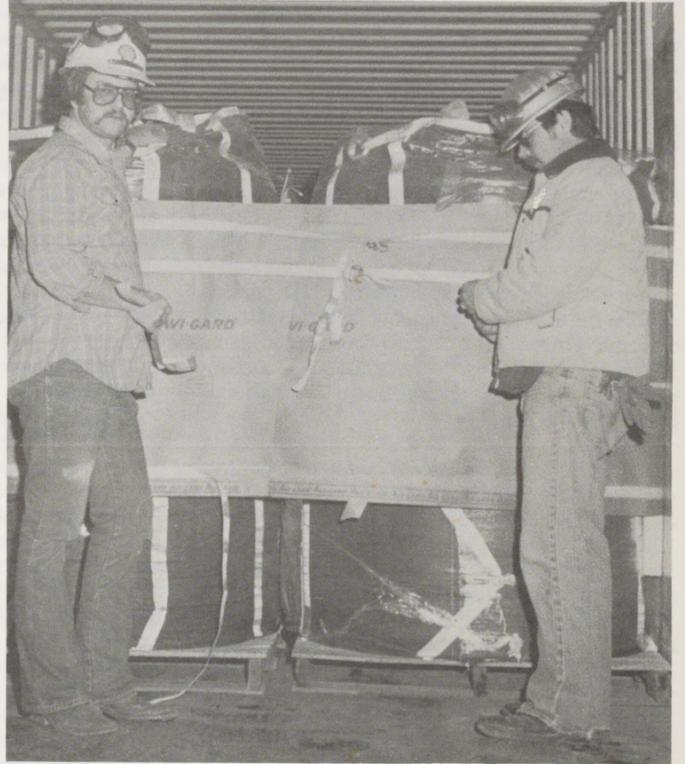
Alpert noted that most resins are "performance products," used in goods like paints, protective coatings and laminates that must fit customer specifications. Some of the products are even specially packaged for the customer. "But sometimes a customer isn't satisfied even when the product meets his specifications," Alpert said.

"Two-thirds of our complaints were service-related," said Paul Downey, Distribution service manager, a member of SQUAT. "If our products arrived to the customer damaged, it reflected on the company. The truck driver is the first image the customer sees of Shell."

The solution was to coordinate all the DPMC operations involved in the distribution of the product, including workers in the lab, the office and the field. When the new quality assurance teams were formed, everyone began to play a more active role in the marketing of the product.

"The quality assurance teams are trying to be more preventive than reactive," Gutierrez explained. "With better and proper emphasis, we can anticipate problems before they happen."

The program seems to have made an immediate impact. Gutierrez pointed out that in the last year there has been a 40 percent decrease in the number of typical service



Larry Chaney, left, and Mel Hokanson, right, Resins Distribution, secure a super sack load of BPA bound for Japan. To protect the load the operators sealed it with "Avi-gard," an artificial bulkhead which will prevent the load from shifting during transportation.



Lupe Palacios, Resins Distribution operator, loads a truck with a cargo of BPA. These bags were specially packaged to meet a customer's specifications.

complaints, such as products arriving to the customer late or damaged.

Bill Bridges, supervisor of Office Services, Distribution, said that in one year's time DPMC moved from the top of one customer's complaint list to the bottom. "That saved the company about \$100,000 a month in lost business," said Bridges, a member of SQUAT.

Marvin Johnsen, staff engineer, Economics and Scheduling, said resins may have unique service problems with its products but that all QUAT teams have the same goal — "to improve service. If we can get everyone involved with quality assurance, thinking about it year after year, eventually it will become a way of life."

## After 15 years, Josh Sorotzkin is off on the right foot . . . again

When Josh Sorotzkin takes a stroll these days, he says he feels like he's floating. "It's an unbelievable feeling," he says, a broad smile crossing his face. "I feel like I'm gliding on air."

Indeed, his friends around the Complex barely recognize him now. Gone are the short, hobbled paces, the scuff of dragging a leg that had grown shorter and shorter. Today, there are no more crippled steps, no canes, no crutches.

The DPMC staff engineer was born with a hip socket too shallow to tightly hold his thigh bone, the femur, in place. The shallow hip socket could allow movement at any time, but there was no hint of dislocation until he was 35 — comfortably middle-aged, very active and very successful.

His right leg began to slip some 15 years ago. When he looks back into the past, it seems like a cruel dream, but the pain of wasted years and tortured steps calls him back to reality. His femur gradually moved two and three quarter inches out of the hip socket, sliding upward into his muscles where it became imbedded. As he hobbled more and more, the muscles in his

right leg atrophied, and the leg slowly grew shorter.

While Sorotzkin checked with expert after expert, searching for an answer to his failing leg, he could only watch hopelessly as his leg deteriorated. Even though the defect had been diagnosed when he was born, he found little hope for recovery.

"Most of the experts said there was practically no chance to equalize the leg. They said I would never be able to walk completely normal again," he said.

The solution was total hip replacement (THR) surgery, an operation experts called second only to open heart surgery in the trauma it causes to the body. Sorotzkin's case was so unique — one doctor was flabbergasted he could walk at all with such a difference in length between the two legs — that the British doctor who developed THR was also consulted. He spent four hours under the knife, lost 40 percent of his blood and stayed nearly three weeks in the hospital. But today he's on his feet, walking straight and tall.

"I feel very fortunate. I still consider it a miracle," he said.

"It has made a great change both physically and spiritually. It was like a window opening, and now I look at the world differently."

Sorotzkin has learned to appreciate the little things many of us take for granted. When was the last time you looked forward to taking an afternoon stroll? Or tying your shoelaces, for that matter? "It's so easy to walk now after being crippled," he said. "I look for every opportunity to move now so I can catch up on those 15 years."

The great tragedy is not that Sorotzkin was born with the defect, but that it laid dormant until he was 35. "It always had the potential to slip out," he said, "but until then, everything was in place. I had everything I wanted."

He grew up on a farm, high jumped and broad jumped in high school, and excelled in other sports. When he began his Shell career nearly 25 years ago, he was one of his bowling team's high scorers.

But in 1966, Sorotzkin's hip bone began to move upwards. The dislocation started slowly; Sorotzkin simply put less pressure on his right leg. But within five years the leg had



Josh Sorotzkin

Canes and crutches are bound for the closet

shortened a half-inch and by an inch three years later. He limped noticeably now, and he seemed to tilt to the right when he ambled by. But he felt no pain, and he decided to limp along despite the "flat tire."

"The key was that there was

no limitation in doing what I wanted," he said, explaining why he did not opt for the surgery earlier. "I walked terribly, but I had no pain. I had a lot of good blessings. I

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## U. S. can't afford to ignore energy "warning signals"

The President of Shell Oil Company applauded the nation's progress in moving toward a sound domestic energy policy and away from dependence on foreign oil, but he cautioned that a sense of complacency could cause the nation to ignore warning signals that "constitute an energy alert for the 1980s."

"It is one thing to be optimistic about our progress in curing our nation's energy problem," said John F. Bookout. "It is another thing to be lulled into complacency and to squander the opportunity to protect America against future energy crises."

Bookout assessed the current United States energy situation during a recent speech in Los Angeles.

"The marketplace is working," he said. "We no longer increase our use of energy in the same proportion to our economic growth." He pointed out that the uncoupling of energy consumption and economic growth, long thought to be inextricably linked, is enhanced by "a new coupling of energy conservation with encouragement of domestic energy production."

"As a result," Bookout said, "we now anticipate a future not overly dependent on imported oil, as opposed to the 1970s when half of our energy was oil and almost half of that oil had to be imported."

1981 U.S. oil imports ran 13 percent below 1980, including quadrupled purchases for the strategic petroleum reserve. Since the peak year of 1978, gasoline demand has dropped about 11 percent and is still on the decline. America produced its 1980 Gross National Product (GNP), the total of all the goods and services the country produces, using 14 percent less energy per GNP unit than it did in 1973.

Bookout also pointed out that OPEC's current 20 million barrel-a-day production is 11 million barrels a day less than it produced in 1979. OPEC's

share of the world oil market has shrunk to 45 percent, a significant decline from 1979 when it supplied 60 percent of the free world's oil.

But the oil company executive warned that America cannot neglect its major domestic energy options like oil, natural gas and coal if it hopes to reach the next decade in a commanding energy position.

While the country's energy future looks bright, Bookout noted four "warning signals" that would signify a slippage back to over-consumption and over-dependence on foreign oil.

"First, watch for setbacks in offering government land for energy exploration. The federal government owns one-third of the land in the U.S. and all offshore areas beyond state jurisdiction, which are estimated to hold the bulk of yet-to-be discovered energy resources. Although only about five percent of the government lands have been offered for lease, these lands already provide 12 percent of U.S. oil production, 29 percent of natural gas production and eight percent of coal production.

"Second, watch for roadblocks in clearing up unnecessary regulations. Such regulations have offered obstruction without protection.

"Third, watch for a failure to speed up the de-control of natural gas prices. Shell has estimated that if all price controls on natural gas were phased out between now and 1985, the investment of the additional revenue would produce by 1990 an additional 1.4 million barrels of oil and gas per day.

"Fourth, watch for a tendency to look upon the oil industry as a way to balance the budget. Twelve states are flirting with the idea of increasing taxes on the oil industry. In Washington, some proposals involve short-sighted predictions about additional windfall profits tax on natural gas revenues at the expense of the oil industry."

## Shell News



### Shell strikes Brazilian oil

A group of United States oil companies, led by Shell Oil's Pecten Brazil, has struck oil in a well that Brazilian officials say eventually could produce between 8,000 and 28,000 barrels a day.

Shell confirmed the strike in the offshore well. It was the first commercial oil discovery by a non-Brazilian company since Brazil opened 1.3 million square miles of territory to contract exploration in 1975.

Shell engineers said the flow rate was about 1,000 barrels a day. The well was drilled to 11,359 feet in 74 feet of water about five miles off the Brazilian coast.

Pecten Brazil owns a 40 percent interest in the well. Other companies in the group included Chevron, the foreign exploration and production arm of Standard Oil Co. of California, which holds a 35 percent interest in the well and Union Oil Co. of California which has a 25 percent interest.

Brazil's domestic oil production has been rising steadily in recent years and now averages nearly 250,000 barrels a day. But domestic demand far exceeds production and the nation still imports about three-quarters of its oil.

### ILC becomes part of Shell

International Lubricant Corporation (ILC), a wholly-owned Shell Oil subsidiary since 1946, became part of the company January 1.

Located in Metairie, Louisiana, ILC is a major facility for compounding and packaging lubricants. ILC produces Shell Fire and Ice motor oil, greases, transmission fluid and aviation motor oil at its plant near New Orleans. It currently has about 200 employees who became Shell employees with the New Year.

The move was designed to increase the company's overall efficiency in the compounding, packaging and shipping of lubricants.

## DPMC Holiday Celebrations

### Catalytic Reforming and Hydrocracking Safety Dinner



Earl Page, left, machinist, Tommy Trevino, center, machinist, and his wife Sylvia, right, were on hand to celebrate the Catalytic Reforming and Hydrocracking safety dinner.



Chester Hargis, left, retiree, catches up on the latest Hydrocracking news from D.O. Goodson, right, pipefitter.



V.J. Johnson, operator, relaxed with his wife Jannet, as they enjoyed an evening of fine food and good company.

## 1981 SCORA Christmas Party



Joe White, Dispatching Operations, and his wife Clydora, relaxed at their table when they weren't dancing. A crowd of about 300 people turned out for the annual holiday dance.



Johnny Brecheen, a welder at Maintenance South, did a little Texas two-step while he led his wife Mary across the dance floor.



Everyone got a good dose of holiday cheer during the Christmas dance. Ray Hornsby, Purchasing and General Services, and his wife Pat, quietly celebrated together.

# VOE program valuable to Shell recruiting



Mary Escobar

## VOE program gave her career a head start

DPMC regularly hires vocational education students for support staff positions to fill vacation relief and summer job needs. These temporary jobs not only can turn into permanent positions, but they provide the company with a chance to attract qualified minorities and females to its

gates.

Mary Escobar, a clerk in the mail room, was hired by Shell after she had worked at the Complex for nearly a year. Mary came to Shell when she was a high school senior enrolled in the Vocational Office Education (VOE) Program. When she graduated

last May, she was offered a full-time position at DPMC.

VOE students spend half their day in school and half their day working at a business in the community. At school, the students work in a simulated office setting where they get a chance to develop the skills they'll use on the job. The program, in which schools across the country participate, is designed to bridge the gap between high school training and business experience.

Mary, an 18-year-old LaPorte native, said she enjoyed her new job at the Complex. "I'm not stuck behind a desk all day, and I get to meet a lot of people. We make three mail runs a day, and in between we sort the mail to be delivered, so it gets pretty busy."

Mary has high praise for the VOE program that gave her a head start in the job market. "I'd never worked before, so it was a good opportunity for me. I think it's a good program," she added.

By participating in the program, Shell provides a chance for young persons interested in pursuing an office career to develop first-hand experience on the job, but the program also benefits the company.

"The VOE program provides the company with necessary manpower while at the same time offering the student an opportunity to use the skills that have been acquired in the classroom," said Lamar Lewis, DPMC Personnel manager. "The program

provides on-the-job training for individuals and is a valuable source of permanent employees for DPMC."

The VOE program also provides Shell an excellent opportunity to attract qualified minorities and females, long a priority at DPMC. The company's affirmative action program, established in the mid-1960s, was created to ensure that qualified minorities and women would be encouraged to seek employment at DPMC.

Affirmative action is designed to take positive steps to eliminate artificial race and sex barriers in the recruitment, employment, training and promotion of qualified individuals. The Equal Opportunity Office at the Complex interprets it as "giving everyone a fair shake."

Each year, the office analyzes the number of minorities and women working in different job groups at DPMC and compares those statistics with the ethnic and sex make-up of the qualified work force. The office tries to see that qualified minorities and women are hired in approximately the same percentages as are available in the greater Houston area. If there is a significant difference between availability and employment in the jobs at DPMC, the office sets goals for the year to try and even the balance.

Because of Houston's explosive population growth, the availability of minorities and women for jobs changes often.

The Equal Opportunity Office takes this into account when it begins its annual goal-setting process. Federal regulations require the Complex to keep careful record of the affirmative action progress it makes.

David Hood, Employee Relations representative, said DPMC will "continue to strive to meet parity between the number of minorities and women working at the Complex and the percentages of qualified people in the labor market. When we reach that goal, we'll continue monitoring our work force and try to maintain at least a minimum of those figures," he said.

Since the creation of the affirmative action program, DPMC has made marked strides in hiring minorities and women. For example, the number of minorities employed at the Complex has risen from 7.9 percent of all DPMC employees in 1968 to 20.3 percent in 1981. The percentage of women employed at the Complex increased from 7.9 percent in 1968 to 11.8 percent in 1981.

DPMC has a number of ways it uses to recruit minorities and women for its work force. Recruiting officers often make trips to predominantly minority schools, and job openings are listed in newspapers like El Sol and the Forward Times. It also has ongoing contacts with local and national employment agencies, and DPMC takes full advantage of the Houston media as well.

## One man's slice is another man's gain

### This collector's hobby leads him from tee to green

Bob Vanston is a self-admitted duffer. When he picks up a golf club, nobody lines up to watch. Few people applaud his putts or idolize his drives. But his slices and bogeys led him to a new hobby — collecting golf balls.

And what a collector he's become. Vanston, an operator at the Cat Cracker, has more than 3,000 different balls. He stores them in his garage in color-coded egg cartons so he can keep track of every small white ball. "So far they haven't wandered into the house yet," he said.

"I got started collecting golf balls the same way everybody else does," said Vanston, who will celebrate his 30th anniversary at DPMC later this year. "I knocked my ball into the rough, and when I looked for it, I found everybody else's. I said the heck with the golf game — it's more fun hunting the balls."

Vanston's hobby is like anyone else's — personal and passionate. Once a week he combs the roughs and bayous of a local course searching for elusive golf balls last seen between launch and landing. Ironically, the course he checks is located near the Ship Channel, within easy reach of foreign duffers who dock in Houston.

The collector has balls from General Electric, Caesar's Palace, Schlitz and about six dozen Japanese balls. Vanston also has 15 balls emblazoned with that familiar pecten shell — no two alike. He said the oddest ball in his collection is an antique Spalding with a 40 pound compression rating, making it nearly solid rubber. Vanston isn't certain, but he thinks that ball could be 70 years old.

To help him keep track of his growing collection, he compiled a catalog of all his discoveries. Each ball he finds is listed by manufacturer, then further subdivided by brand and any other identifying marks. The listings are even cross-indexed, for easier reference.

Occasionally, Vanston sounds suspiciously scientific. "One time I found a ball in the bank of a bayou that had dried out," he recalled. "I started digging in the bank, and I discovered ball after ball, just laying there like turtle eggs." It's not hard to imagine him dressed in khaki, sifting through clay and earth in remote parts of the world searching for fossils.

Vanston still golfs, but instead of gauging the distance beyond the next sand trap, he has an eye peeled on little white spots hiding in the rough. He's been collecting balls seven years, and if nothing else,

he said, "it's good exercise for an old man.

"But the balls do have a value," he argues. "First of all, I like to add different balls to my collection." But that's the aesthetic value only the collector gets, Mr. Vanston. "Secondly, most of my friends know I have balls available. I sell the ones that have been struck only once for about \$4 a dozen, which is a lot cheaper than a dozen new balls at the course." Ah-hah...they do indeed have a value. "Whatever the market will bear," Vanston said.

Besides collecting golf balls, Vanston also collects golf clubs. Since it's a little harder to find lost clubs on the links, he instead visits thrift stores looking for hidden bargains. "Many elderly people just give the clubs away," he said. "A widow might find her husband's clubs in the attic, and having no idea of the value, gives them away to the Salvation Army."

Vanston even made headlines a few years ago with one of his discoveries. In a Houston thrift shop a number two wood, autographed by the famous athlete Babe Didrikson Zaharias, immediately caught his eye. "When I picked it up, the feel really appealed to me.



Although Bob Vanston has only been collecting golf balls seven years, he already has an assortment of 3,000 balls. He's found balls from many different countries, and from a number of businesses, including 15 Shell balls which all differ in some respect, pictured above. Collecting golf balls naturally led an interest in clubs. He has several collector's items, including those to the right.

The handle of the shaft was specially made," he said. "I could tell it wasn't a normal club."

Vanston thought the experts at the Babe Didrikson Zaharias Foundation in Beaumont, where the Olympic athlete grew up, could shed some light on the mysterious club. About eight months after he donated the club to the Foundation, he learned the club had been one of Zaharias' personal set. It's now on exhibit in the museum there.



# Classifieds

## FOR SALE

Eight foot fiberglass antenna with roof clip. Includes rod only. \$7. Call 476-0857.

Pair of side mirrors for pick-up, van or four-wheel-drive vehicle. Mirrors are 6 inches by 9 inches stainless steel with mounting hardware. Never used. \$35 or best offer. Call 631-1618.

Four P20575R-14 steel belted radials. Mounted on Rally wheels. Used on 1978 Cutlass. Good tread left. Call 487-9640.

1955 GMC Pick-up. New paint. Excellent condition. Call 471-7098.

Male AKC Samoyed. Eight months old. Champion bloodline. Call 471-7098.

## LOST

Black plastic lunchbox with employee badge on it. Please call 476-7942.

## FOUND

Small New Testament Bible. Found near gas pumps in Chemical plant. Has two names inside. Contact Marshall Rossinger at 476-7302.

Prescription safety glasses for gas mask. Found in Olefins area last month. Claim in person at Room 151, N. Admin. Building.

## PERSONALS

To my many friends at Shell, I wish to thank all of you for my retirement party, the many gifts and good wishes. I know I will miss you! I will be at 1101 Avenue A in South Houston. Come see me sometime.

Charles Hay

I'd like to thank my friends and co-workers for their kind words and gifts that were given to me at my retirement party. We are enjoying using the microwave oven and lawn mower and have the lovely scroll hung in our den. Thank you again and drop by to see us.

Frank and Mamie Wetuski

# Welcome to DPMC



**Carl Grimmer**  
Staff Engineer  
Econ. & Sched. S.  
Trans. in Nov.



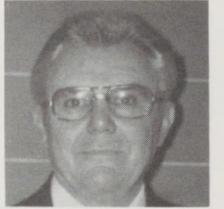
**Larry Hale**  
Sr. Engineer  
Eng. Inspect.  
Trans. in Nov.



**Twilla Walley**  
Typist  
Project Engrg.  
Hired in Nov.



**Christy Wehmeyer**  
Clerk II  
Gen. Services  
Hired in Nov.



**Dale Wilkinson**  
Claims Manager  
Personnel  
Trans. in Nov.

## Sorotzkin: one step leads to another

Continued from page 1

had a nice family, a good job. I was more fortunate than most people," he said.

Another factor influenced Sorotzkin to delay the surgery that would ultimately restraighten his leg. "I didn't want to upset my family life if something happened," he said calmly. "The method of operation was not as polished in those days as it is now. The risk involved was not so much in replacing the hip joint, but in extending the leg to its former position. If something happened during surgery to the nervous system, there was a chance of paralysis."

When his right leg began to falter last June, and a nagging pain developed in his lower back, Sorotzkin decided the time had come to attempt the surgery. Although he had felt no pain before, Sorotzkin now said it felt like "one side of a building collapsing."

The complicated surgery was performed by one of the world's finest orthopedic surgeons. Sorotzkin's leg was slit open from his thigh to his knee. The doctors slowly pushed his right leg bone back into place, watching the bone as it slid through nerves and muscles into its old position. Sorotzkin's old, defective hip socket was replaced with a new one made of polyethylene, and the head of the femur was replaced with special com-

position stainless steel.

By mid-November Sorotzkin traded in his crutches for a shiny cane — my baton," he called it. By the middle of February, if his recovery remains as sparkling as it has been, all the restrictions will be removed from him.

Sorotzkin is currently splitting his time between DPMC and an office at Wood Creek, allowing him a chance to recuperate before he faces the daily stress of Houston traffic. Since he's returned to the Complex, however, he said he's had several inquiries about his condition from people afflicted with similar problems.

"Those with a problem like a physical handicap should get a medical opinion," Sorotzkin said. "Medical technology is now much safer. There have been so many advances in the field of medicine that many major operations are now quite routine."

But Sorotzkin has a broader message that sounds as clearly as his steady, confident footsteps. He serves as an inspiration to others with problems, those who must persevere in a difficult situation. "I never gave up hope that one day I might walk normally again," he said. "It takes faith in yourself and the Almighty, but you cannot give up hope." After 15 years of struggling, he was rewarded.



No, Ron Keplinger didn't just buy a Toyota. He was celebrating his 29th anniversary with Shell on Dec. 10. But on that day he also reached another company milestone. The combination of his years of service and his age gave him 80 points, making the senior Economics and Scheduling analyst a fully-vested pensioner. Keplinger, who's been at DPMC since 1972, said it felt like "adding insurance." His secretaries made sure the event wouldn't go unnoticed by thoroughly decorating his office before he got to work that morning.



**Betsy Buxbaum**

The *Shellegram* is published each week for the purpose of informing and recognizing pensioners and employees like Betsy Buxbaum, a typist in Financial. Betsy has worked at the Complex since August 1981.

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