

WORK SAFE; IT MAY BE
LATER THAN YOU THINK.

—Ralph Moton, Supply Room,
a winner in the 1954 Safety
Slogan Contest.

Firestone NEWS

GASTONIA

DON'T SHORTEN YOUR STAY;
LIVE SAFELY EACH DAY.

—Velma Brooks, SYC Weaving,
a winner in the 1954
Safety Slogan Contest.

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Newspapers Laud Firestone

(Editor's note: On December 29 and 30, 1954, several newspaper editors and trade paper writers made an inspection tour of the new electronically-controlled, safety tensioning and gum-dipping tire cord unit at Firestone Textiles. Lyle Edwards and James W. Atkins of The Gastonia Gazette were among those who viewed the new equipment here. The following editorial appeared in The Gazette, Thursday, December 30.)

Firestone Forges Ahead

Yesterday the Firestone Tire & Rubber Company, at its Gastonia textile plant, displayed to a number of newspapermen and trade journal representatives its new Nylon Hot Stretch Dip Unit, the first cord-treating factory of its kind in the world.

This new operation, which took years of work and preparation, will make safer, stronger, and longer-wearing automobile and truck tires than have ever before been made in history.

Gastonia should be proud and happy that Firestone chose its Gastonia plant for this historic new operation.

You have read or will read in news stories the details of this new plant.

There is no reason to recite the details here.

Suffice it to repeat that this newly activated addition to the Gastonia Firestone plant is a credit to our city.

We are glad they chose Gastonia for this important new operation.

(Making the tour of inspection of the new tire cord treating equipment on December 29 was David E. Gillespie, president and publisher of The Gaston Citizen, Gastonia. The following article appeared in the Citizen December 30, in Gillespie's column "Mornin' Citizen!")

Some Changes Made

More than 15 years ago we walked up to Russ Conrad, overseer of the weaving room at Firestone, and told him we were quitting our creeling job to write sports for the newspaper.

That was in 1939 and we had just finished high school. Jobs were pretty scarce that summer and we had become a creeler only through the fact that Ed Spencer of the employment office knew our father and wanted to help us out.

Mr. Conrad wasn't too unhappy about us leaving. We doubt that we were the best creeler he ever saw. And we've got the scars on our shins to back up that statement.

So that's how we got into the newspaper business. And, up until yesterday, we had been back inside the Firestone plant only one time since 1939.

The changes during those 15 years are amazing. We would never have recognized the plant if we hadn't known our destination yesterday. But we certainly saw a lot of people we knew years ago and, surprisingly enough, remembered most of the names.

How Firestone has grown!

Ed Spencer used to employ all the help, handle the personnel problems, take care of the insurance, and find time to rent the company houses on the side.

Now they've got about a dozen men doing the job he used to do (it's on a much larger scale today, of course). And there's an office jammed with men and women who represent the clerical force.

The plant is a lot cleaner today than it was 15 years ago. We imagine that the heavy emphasis on the synthetics, which don't blow around like cotton, has a lot to do with that. But both management and labor have learned, too, that clean plants are the best operated.

The people are happier and more prosperous looking. They take pride in their work. They've either bought or are buying their own homes. They own good automobiles and many of them are sending their youngsters through college.

Not only has Firestone and many other textile plants in Gaston County changed physically through the years, they've changed mentally, too.

We ran into a fellow-worker of 15 years ago. He shook our hand, joked about the clumsiness we used to exhibit in the weave room, and asked us how we would like to be back on the job.

And we weren't just kidding when we say that sometimes we wish we were.



Slogan Winners Get Awards

Winners of the 1954 Safety Slogan Contest received their award checks from General Manager Harold Mercer on January 10.

In presenting the checks, Mr. Mercer reviewed briefly the Firestone policy on safety. He emphasized that "safety is a continuing Firestone desire—not so much because accidents are costly in terms of money, but because prevention of accidents means lessening of human suffering and lost time on the job."

The General Manager lauded the contest winners and said that their interest was indicative of the growing safety consciousness on the part of all employees.

First prize in the contest was \$25; second, \$15; third, \$10; and the next 10 were \$5 each.

March Of Dimes Ends January 31

Freeing victims from iron lungs and releasing them from total reliance on braces and crutches are objectives of the 1955 March of Dimes which opened January 3 and will continue through January 31.

"The greatest weapon in our arsenal is our stubborn determination to return health and vigor to children and adults who have fallen victim to the crippling disease of polio," said H. Rex Edison, chairman of the Gaston County Chapter, National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis.

"Even if the Salk vaccine eventually banishes the fear of polio, we must make sure there are no forgotten victims—those stricken before there was any polio vaccine to protect them," Edison declared.

"We don't know yet whether the trial vaccine actually can protect a single child from paralysis. If the evaluation shows it does, we will make 9,000,000 vaccinations available this year. To do this will cost a lot of money, but it will be money joyfully spent.

Dimes and dollars contributed to the March of Dimes will help in prevention, treatment, and epidemic aid to victims of polio.

Nationwide, the March of Dimes needs \$64,000,000 in 1955, all of which must be raised in the January drive, it was pointed out.

General Manager Harold Mercer (extreme right, front row) congratulates James R. Thomas, Weaving Department, and presents him with a check for \$25 as first prize in the recent Safety Slogan Contest.

In the picture (front row, from left) are T. B. Ipock, Jr., Director Industrial Relations; William G. Henson, Plant Engineer; Rosie Francum, Shop, third-place winner; Annie Lay, Plastic Dip; Marlene Stewart, Rayon Weaving; Juanita McDonald, SYC Weaving; Mr. Thomas; and Mr. Mercer.

In second row are L. B. McAbee, Safety Director; Nelson Kessel, General Superintendent; James Gaultney, Rayon Weaving; Roy Hutchins, Ply Twisting; Ralph Moton, Supply Room; James Thompson, Ply Twisting; Thurman Clark, Quality Control; Fred Morrow, Supervisor of Warehouse; Francis Galligan, Superintendent of the Cotton Division.

Not present for the picture were Ralph Dalton, second-place winner; and Velma Brooks.

22 Complete Long Service Records

Five employees became eligible for 15-year service pins as of January this year. At the same time, 7 became eligible for 10-year pins; and 10, for 5-year pins.

Following is a list of names of those completing the long-term service records:

Fifteen Years

Carding: Claude Bolding, Frontus Lyles, William C. Watts. Spinning: Carrie Helms. Rayon Weaving: Nettie B. Corn.

Ten Years

Spinning: Ira Neal Broadway; Newton W. Lynch. Spooling: Sarah M. Scruggs, Cora D. Sanders. Rayon Twisting: Newton Colvard. Cot-

ton Weaving: Ruby S. Wiggins. Shop: Thomas Farr.

Five Years

Spinning: Louise M. Tate. Spooling: Frances Q. Player, Gertrude G. Hampton. Cotton Twisting: Trella M. Beaver. Cotton Weaving: Rochel Player, William C. Shull, Aliene N. Smith. Cloth Room: Eva O. Henson. Quality Control: William J. Glenn. Winding: E. P. McArver.

Total number of service pins distributed by Firestone Textiles through December 31, 1954 were: 363 for 15 years service; 808 for 10 years; and 1,851 for 5 years.

Pins for those employees who became eligible in January will be presented at a later date.

Company Has Paid Over \$900,000 For Employees' Suggestions

The Firestone Tire & Rubber Company has paid out more than \$900,000 in awards for ideas from employees for improvements in production, sales and office operations since starting its suggestion system in 1918.

Awards have totaled about \$903,000, said L. J. Alger, Manager of the Suggestion System for the Company, in a year-end review. During the 36 years, employees have submitted 178,000 suggestions and of these more than 53,000 have been adopted.

From 25 plants throughout the world and from the sales and office forces, the Company is now receiving about 12,000 suggestions a year and putting into use about 3,600—an adoption rate of 30.9 per cent. The National Industry rate is 26.9.

Rate of participation in the suggestion plan also is running high, with 325 suggestions received per year per 1,000 employees—a participation rate of 33 1/3 per cent—well above the National Industry rate of 217.

Awards now top \$80,000 a year. The suggestion system encourages employees to offer ideas for improving working conditions, quality, safety and sales, and for economizing on operations and on material usage. Amounts of awards for improved operations are in proportion to tangible yearly savings. Other awards are based upon intangible savings and benefits to workers in adding comfort and safety to their jobs.

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