ESSO FLEET NEWS

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

The Importance of Being Excellent



By C. E. Reistle, Jr.
President
Humble Oil & Refining Co.

The following are extracts from an address by Mr. Reistle before the Semifinalists, National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, March 10, 1963. While Mr. Reistle's remarks were intended for high school students, they are also inspiring, we think, to anyone who does not consider himself too old to learn.*

The theme of my remarks for this occasion is drawn from one of the basic aims of the Merit Program itself . . . "To encourage the pursuit of excellence at all educational levels and in the broader society."

What do we mean when we say "pursuit of excellence?" To me, pursuit means a seeking and a striving that never ends. Certainly it implies no guarantee of achieving excellence, any more than we are guaranteed happiness by the Declaration of Independence because of the right it gives us to pursue happiness.

Now about "excellence". Does it mean genius, or being No. 1 in everything; the winner of every game? Not the kind of excellence I am talking about. Excellence to me means winning the competition with yourself, doing your individual best, making the best use of the talents you have.

Success in the pursuit of excellence is not beyond the reach of the average man or woman. It is often reflected in the uncommon performance of average men who put forth some extra effort. Many a lock would yield; many a door would open if more people understood and put to use these three keys to better performance: (1) the desire to be productive, (2) an unwillingness to settle for anything less than one's best effort, and (3) a capacity for hard work.

Let us look for a moment at some of the personal traits of those who recognize the importance of being excellent and who are willing to work at it. I think that some of the most important of these are an inquiring mind, a desire to do something, a constructive dissatisfaction with things as they are, and the ability to discipline oneself.

The first thing I would list is an inquiring mind. Uncommon men and women have an ability to deal with ideas. They realize that ideas are really more important and more permanent than people. In fact, ideas are indestructible. You can't shoot an idea through the head or throw one into a dungeon. If you could kill one with a bayonet, there never would have been a Lexington and Concord, or a storming of the Bastille.

Another thing that usually marks the man or woman of excellence is the desire to do something . . . do something new or something better than it has been done before. Make no mistake about this: the desire to do something is often more important than knowing how to do it. The obstacle of not knowing how to do something never kept a determined man from trying to do it. A famous scientist and inventor once remarked: "If I want to do something, I start, whether I know how or not." He might have added that disappointment wouldn't discourage him if the project didn't work out right the first time, or even the hundredth time.

Still another quality that enters into the pursuit of excellence is a constructive dissatisfaction with things as they are. Someone had to be dissatisfied with hard rubber tires before pneumatic tires were invented. Someone had to be dissatisfied with sailing vessels, which moved slowly at the mercy of unpredictable winds, before the steamship or steamboat was invented. Someone

*In connection with National Merit Scholarships, Alfred W. Zoepf, son of Werner Zoepf, AB in the *Esso Dallas*, has won a finalist award in this year's competition. Alfred, 17, will graduate from Terry Parker High School, Jacksonville, this June and has applied for a Teagle Scholarship to attend M.I.T.

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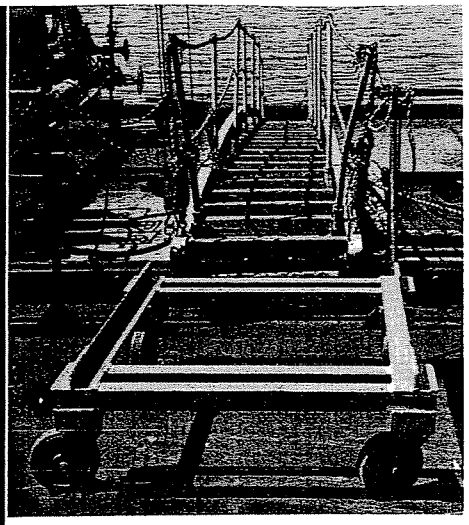

Gangway Dolly

A while back some independent thinkers and men of action aboard a supertanker latched on to a small wheeled vehicle at Baton Rouge and have been using it to lessen the labor of moving the gangway to and from the ship's side. Now, a legitimate conveyance for this purpose has been fabricated and placed aboard the *Esso Jamestown*.

Port Engineer T. J. McTaggart designed the dolly and cut the frames out of aircraft aluminum and, with Asst. Port Engineer H. W. Bradbury, bolted on neoprene-tired wheels. The frame was assembled by a Baytown welding shop.

As can be seen from the photo (which also shows new cleats on the gangway), it should be a fairly simple matter to set the dolly under the gangway and wheel it across the deck. Also, with a plywood bottom and possibly some other modifications, the dolly might make a handy truck for moving supplies. We'll see how it works out.

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had to be dissatisfied with the slow, laborious process of picking cotton lint from seed before the cotton gin was invented. And so it goes, all through the history of man's progress. Most of our new and better ways of doing things have come about because someone was dissatisfied with the old ways.

Successful people choose their life's work because they love it—and I can't think of a better reason. They know one principle of life that many people never understand, and that is the principle of "Service before reward". Remember that expression—"Service before reward"—for you will come face to face with it all through your life. Those who truly serve and serve well will be rewarded in due course. Those who are motivated to serve only by the prospect of reward are more likely to be disappointed. The world is full of unhappy people who think they should have gotten some reward or other, but who have really done little to justify one.

One thing useful to have at your right hand as you strive for excellence in life is courage. Courage takes many forms. It may be courage in the face of ridicule; against threats or bodily harm; the courage to risk loss of position or status —or it may be just daring to be different.

New Early Retirement Figures

Our electronic data processing machines in Houston have turned out another "run" of annuity figures for seagoing men who qualify (at least 50 years of age and 15 years' service) for the Company's Special Voluntary Early Retirement offer. The new annuity figures assume a retirement date of July 1, 1963 instead of Jan. 1, and of course, will be somewhat higher.

The purpose of the new run is to include a few men who were missed the first time and also, those who will become eligible during the first six months of this year. Since it is just as easy to run through the complete list as part of it, July 1 annuity figures are available upon request and with no obligation to all eligible seamen.

Deadline for acceptance of the special offer, let us repeat, is June 30, 1963, when all papers must be signed and in the office. However, Ed Fischer, Head of the A & B and Claims Section, requests as much time prior to the cut-off date as possible in order to process papers and get annuity checks started soon after retirement.

Major Medical Insurance

As a result of discussions with the Jersey Standard Tanker Officers, Esso Radio Officers and Esso Seamen's associations and the Esso Stewards Organization, seagoing personnel will shortly have an opportunity to join the Major Medical plan. This is an extended coverage insurance that picks up where Hospital-Surgical-Medical (Health Service, Inc.) leaves off.

Information describing the new coverage and its costs will be sent to employees and annuitants shortly. (Only annuitants who retired after Dec. 31, 1962 are eligible to join). The insurance company requires a minimum enrollment in Major Medical of 75% of the Hospital-Surgical-Medical members.

Seamen who are not members of Health Service, Inc. may join during the month of May and sign up for Major Medical at the same time, if they desire. Forms will be available aboard vessels and at all Agents' offices.

Teagle Foundation Nursing Scholarships

Applications for Teagle Foundation Nursing Scholarships for the academic year beginning

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ESSO FLEET NEWS is published for the seagoing employees of the Marine Division, Humble Oil & Refining Co.: Joseph Andreae, General Manager; Sydney Wire, Assistant General Manager.

W. E. Gardner, Editor.

Contributions and suggestions are invited and should be addressed to The Editor, ESSO FLEET NEWS, Humble Oil & Refining Co., P. O. Box 1512, Houston 1, Texas.

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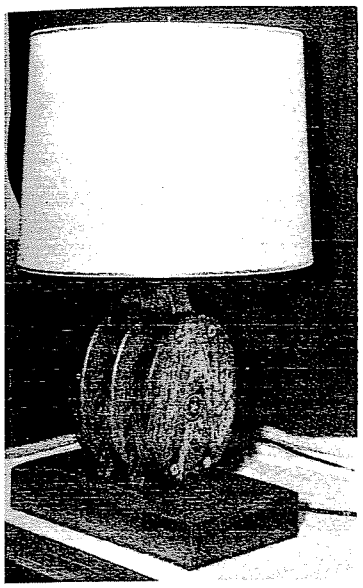
next Sept. are acceptable until July 1, 1963. Scholarship applications should be sent to the Seagoing Personnel Section, Marine Division, Houston, as soon as acceptance is received from the college or nursing school but not later than July 1.



Chief Mate Donald E. Graham, *Esso Miami*, made this attractive nautical lamp from a condemned (no, he did *not* condemn it himself) Boston & Lockport block fastened to a piece of laminated fir. The block was finished by rubbing on 12 coats of hot linseed oil. The base was stained walnut, coated with a satin varnish and waxed. Colors of the two pieces match very well. Two lengths of properly aged rope run through the sheaves to add a realistic touch, two realistic touches, in fact.

The shade is decorated with a chart of Cape Cod and the Georges Bank fishing area. Materials cost $21.34.

Gt. Lakes Barge to Have Remote Controls

This spring a 580′ barge, converted from the 46-year old bulk carrier *Horace S. Wilkinson*, will ply the Great Lakes under tow of an ocean tug. According to a recent article in the WALL STREET JOURNAL, the unmanned barge will steer by remote control, its anchors may be dropped by electronic signals from the tug and the stern will be notched for push towing (as well as by hawser).

The project is being undertaken by the Wilson Marine Transit Co., of Cleveland, as a means of reducing operating costs. Since the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway five years ago, conditions have changed on the Lakes. Foreign flag vessels have been carrying larger portions of the grain trade and imports of iron ore from eastern Canada have been increasing. The result has been that five Lake fleets have gone out of business and several others operated barely half their vessels last year.

TAFFRAIL TALK

Seamen with Oiler or Fireman/Watertender endorsements can expect regular assignments in those ratings when the full effect of the early retirements is felt, according to an estimate by P. J. McEwan, Head of the Seagoing Personnel Section. Mr. McEwan also urges former Wipers to get FWT and Oiler endorsements and suggests MARINE POWER PLANT GUIDE, published by Cornell Maritime Press, Cambridge, Md. ($5.13) as a helpful textbook.

* * *

Our three "Old Pro" tank coating inspectors, Third Mate Harald Ronhave and Second Asst. Engineers Sebastian L. Koep and Anthony Petryk, will soon be at it again. They will leave New York about April 20 for Cadiz, Spain, where the *Esso Brooklyn* is to have Humble protective coatings applied to all cargo tanks, bottom and sides. The work will require about 100 days.

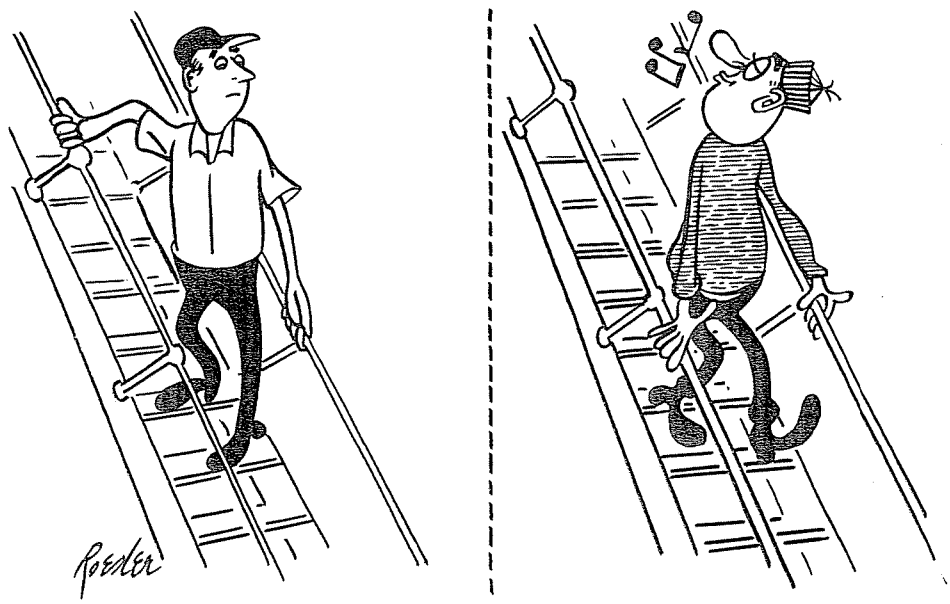
* * *

Joseph Andreae, General Manager of the Marine Division, and John D. Rogers, retired General Manager, were honored at a meeting of the Propeller Club, Port of Baton Rouge, on March 28. Both men were presented with certificates of honorary citizenship and keys to the city on behalf of Mayor Jack Christian. About 125 persons attended the meeting.

HOW DO YOU DESCEND A LADDDER? Like this ↓ or like J. STUMBLEPRONE ↓ ?

As you can readily see, McFracture on the right here is gaily hopping down a ladder, whistling a merry tune — and doing everything wrong. He is 1. not looking where he is going, 2. stepping squarely and getting minimum tread on the steps and 3. has his hands on rails in front of him which, while admittedly graceful, will wrench his shoulders if he has to hold tight to break a fall.

The "good guy" is watching his step, body is turned sideways so that feet get maximum tread on steps and right hand with thumb up is trailing on the rail behind him. Even without the double-jointed elbow this fellow would make it safely.



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W. E. Dougherty was elected a member of the Company's Board of Directors and R. H. Venn, a Director since last August, was elected a Vice President on March 26. Mr. Dougherty was formerly Manager of the Corpus Christi Area and, since Aug. 1962, Executive Assistant to the Humble Board.

RECENT RETIREMENTS



CAPTAIN JOHAN P. NAGEL. After a 44-year seagoing career—starting as a lad of 15 in German schooners and ending with 12 years as Master of Esso tankers—Captain Nagel is set to enjoy the fruits of retirement. These will include orange, grapefruit, lemon, lime, calamondin, cocoanut, Surinam cherry, guava and mango trees — all of which (and more) he and Mrs. Nagel grow at their home in Jupiter, Fla. They have five acres fronting on the Loxahatchee River, 18 miles north of Palm Beach.

From schooners in 1919, Captain Nagel went to tugs and steamers, sailed with a half-dozen American companies and joined Esso's *Geo. H. Jones* as AB on Nov. 21, 1932. He served as Chief Mate from Dec. 1940 until Oct. 24, 1944, when the *S. B. Hunt* (W.E.T., Inc.) became his first command. He has been Master since Aug. 1951 and has had the *Esso Greenville* for the past two years.



FIRST ASST. ENGINEER EDWARD A. MADSEN'S ideas for life after retirement (March 1) include working with a metal-turning lathe, fishing, improving the home and touring the U. S. with Mrs. Madsen—but all within a framework of what he calls "lazy livin' ".

Ed, who lives in Port St. Joe. Fla., sailed as coal passer, fireman and oiler in freighters before he joined the Company's *S. M. Spalding* on Aug. 18, 1935. His first Third Assistant's berth—the *Franklin K. Lane* on May 6, 1942—lasted only until the following month, when the ship was torpedoed and sunk off Venezuela.

Mr. Madsen served as Third, Second and First Asst. for the balance of the War and until June 8, 1948, when he went out as Chief in the *G. Harrison Smith*. Since then he has been First Asst. and Chief Engineer, for the past five years in the *Esso Allentown* and *Bridgeport*.



PUMPMAN WILLARD W. MITCHELL has been working so hard since his "retirement" March 1 that he'd like to make another trip or two to rest up. He has bought two acres of piney woods fronting on Lake Anahuac (about 16 miles east of Baytown) and is building a fishing camp. He has a list of projects as long as your arm—dock, pier, driveway, bait house, new boats, new home, etc., etc. Mrs. Mitchell is out there too, burning brush and acting as advisory superintendent and chief cook.

Of his 18 years of credited service, Mr. Mitchell sailed as Pumpman for the past 13. From 1946 to 1948 he was FWT, Oiler and 2nd Pumpman and had two years of engineroom service between 1927-29. His last ship was the *Esso Chester*.



CHIEF COOK ALTON L. JONES' 16 years in the fleet, all as Chief Cook or Chief Steward, ran from Sept. 1946 to his retirement, March 1. Previously, he served in the South Pacific aboard the repair ship USS *Maui*, was a cook in hotels and restaurants in Miami Beach, a lineman with the Florida Power & Light Co. and a truck driver.

Since retiring, Lee has purchased a tavern in Anahuac, Texas and he and his wife are running it. Their home is in Baytown and they have three children, aged 14 to 18.



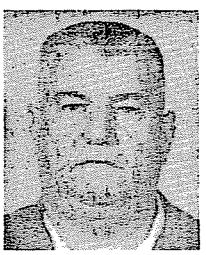
BOS'N MARTIN A. HUBBARD went ashore from the *Esso Lexington* at New York on Jan. 15, just 23 years from the day he started his service in the fleet as OS in the *Niobe*. He advanced to AB in the *Peter Hurll* in Oct. 1940, sailed in this rating throughout World War II and as Bos'n from Sept. 1946 until his retirement, Feb. 1.

Mr. Hubbard and his wife, Ann, live in Matawan, N. J.



OILER EDWARD G. O'CONNOR figures to take a few months' vacation before getting down to the business of retirement. He is thinking about raising dogs — German shepherds and dachshunds.

Mr. O'Connor joined the fleet as FWT in the *F. H. Bedford, Jr.* on Dec. 24, 1946, after 1½ years in the Navy as a motor machinist's mate and a year in Socony Mobil inland waterway craft. For the last 14 of his 16 years' service, he sailed as 2nd Pumpman and Oiler, most recently in the *Esso Lima*. His retirement date was March 1.



WIPER HARRY FLEISCHMANN was born in Maryland, is a long-time resident of Baltimore and has a special fondness for the state's Eastern Shore, famous for its fishing and crabbing. He is also interested in golf, football and soccer.

Mr. Fleischmann was Wiper from April, 1950 until his retirement on March 1 with 15 years' service. Previously, he was in the Steward's Dept. of several vessels, including the *I. C. White* when she was torpedoed and sunk 500 miles off the coast of Brazil on Sept. 27, 1941.

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