

# NorthStar NorthWinds

Vol. 3, No. 9

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## Employee Assistance Program Expanded

If you need a helping hand in dealing with personal problems, you can now dial a 24-hour hotline number sponsored by North Star.

This new number is an extension of the **employee assistance program** that began in March, which offers a counseling service for North Star employees with alcohol, drug, marital or other personal problems.

Many employees have used the service since it began—with *absolute confidentiality and protection of their privacy*. Now, this new number provides even easier access to counseling help without the need to ask supervisors or HRD for a phone number.

The 24-hour hotline number is: (415) 668-5952. Initial contact with this counseling group is free of charge to all employees.

## Spotlight on In-house Training

North Star's new training program has been receiving great reviews! These classes, which can improve employee skills and are often job-related, give us an opportunity to learn more about North Star and its products.

Application software for budget

## It's Your Newsletter— What Do You Want To See In NorthWinds?

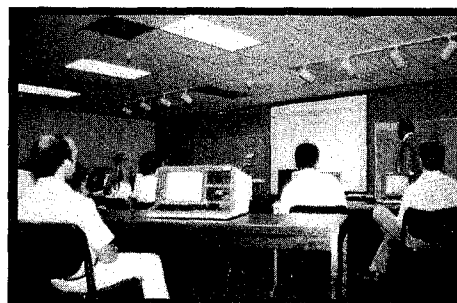
This month, we want to find out what you think about *NorthWinds*. What do you like about the format? Do you want to see other features added? Is *NorthWinds* great just the way it is? Let us know by taking a few minutes to fill in the short questionnaire inside. Once you've filled it out, please put it in the box marked *NorthWinds* (in the cafeteria or by the employee entrance on Farallon). The results will be seen in future issues.

## Holiday Party News

**Friday, December 10**, is the date for this year's Holiday Party. The place is Goodman's Hall in Oakland's Jack London Square. Our spies have checked it out and tell us the food is great and there's plenty of room for dining *and* dancing!

Music this year will be provided by the Brothers Owen—a group that promises to please almost any musical taste.

More information on the Holiday Party will follow in future *NorthWinds*. Watch for it!



preparation (MicroPlan) and word processing (NorthWord and WordStar) are only two of the classes

being offered. If you want to learn InfoManager or more about the company's Marketing Strategies, sign up now for internal training.

October's schedule looks like this:

October 26—WordStar  
(ADVANTAGE) . . . . 1 to 4 p.m.

October 27—CP/M . . . 1 to 4 p.m.

October 28—MicroPlan  
(ADVANTAGE) . . . . 1 to 4 p.m.

For additional information or to register for a class, contact *Karen Schmidt* in Product Training at ext. 582.

# Chuck's Corner

This month I thought it would be interesting to give a summary of the Executive Staff meetings—who, what, where, when and why.

Every Thursday, I hold an Executive Staff meeting with Mark, Bruce, Elliot, Larry, Lou and Surinder.

The purpose of this meeting is to effect communication among each of them, to make or communicate major decisions, to review the status of progress on major company projects, and to discuss future plans, policies, and directions.



The meeting starts with prepared presentations which are usually presented by an Executive Staff member, but occasionally may be presented by an invited manager. Examples of agenda items include: major new customer progress, new product overview, employee morale survey results, a product cost analysis, prior month's financials, revised pricing proposal, and new forecast.

Following the formal agenda, each member gives a department report to discuss progress and any problems in their areas. The meetings generally last for three to four hours, but we have had some eight hour marathons when necessary. The meetings are typically crisp and business-like, with moments of fiery controversy, and moments of humor as well.

# Employee Luncheon Program is Back!

After taking a brief summer vacation, the **employee luncheon program** is back in full swing.

Employee luncheons are held away from the office. You'll enjoy lunch with one of North Star's senior staff members and co-workers from other departments. It's a positive setting for discussion of general concerns with management and an excellent chance to meet and talk with co-workers from other departments.

This long-standing activity has a two-fold purpose:

- 1) To promote a cooperative work environment through personal contact which would not ordinarily occur.
- 2) To learn about employee concerns which otherwise might not be communicated to top management.

All North Star employees can expect a future invitation. Look forward to it!

# News Bits

- Three-year service anniversaries are being celebrated this month by **Howard Butler** (Order Processing), **Sandra Davis** (Order Processing), **Frank Kohzad** (Technical Support), and **Dennis Perry** (Quality Control). It's two years for **Connie Ducey** (Marketing), **Kathy Loram** (Technical Publications), **Joe Strople** (Engineering) and **Dave West** (Engineering Software). Congratulations!

- **Kaye Prothro** (Office Services) recently married Mack W. Robinson, Jr. Best wishes to the happy couple!

- **Library Alert!** Please remember that Building B's library is maintained for market research and that materials are borrowed on the honor system. Borrowed items should be returned within a reasonable period of time so that others can use them, too. And, please remember to replace items in the proper spot so the person after you will find it easily!

# Telephone Tip

Ever hear a "beep" tone when you're on the telephone? You're not wearing a beeper. Is an extra-terrestrial trying to contact you? No—but *someone* is!

The short "beep" tone signals that the receptionist has a caller waiting to speak with you, or someone in-house has "parked" a call on to your extension.

To accept a camp-on call:

- Complete your first conversation and hang up. The camped-on call will *automatically* ring on

your telephone.

To accept a camp-on call *and* maintain connection with your original party:

- After you hear the "beep" tone,
- Flash
- Receive a pulse tone and high-pitched holding tone,
- Key in: ★ 1

If you want to alternate between parties, simply "flash" and use the connect code—★ 1

## Department Feature— **Technical Services Supports North Star's Customers**

Engineering, production, marketing, sales and shipping have all done their part: increasing numbers of HORIZONS, North Star ADVANTAGES, other hardware and software went out the door last month to customers all over the world. Phew! Everyone pats each other on the back and starts thinking about how much we'll sell next month.

But the job's not really complete! This story begins **after** the product is sold.

North Star's customers—our Dealers, Distributors, and OEMs—buy products from North Star. They, in turn, sell them to end-users who run the products constantly for five or six years. Although we do a good job at North Star of designing, producing, shipping and selling our products, at some point in the product's life expectancy, the equipment or the user is going to need help. That's where Technical Services steps in. They provide "after care."

After care? Al Peterson, manager of North Star's Technical Services group, explains. "Somewhere down the line, the North Star end-user needs support from the seller. We help the sellers provide that necessary support to their customers," he said. "We help our customers work technical problems through to a satisfactory conclusion, either by

supplying technical information or by repairing a defective assembly. When we do this, we're making the customer happy—and helping to generate future product sales."

The Technical Services team is composed of two departments with distinct functions—Technical Support and Product Support. "Our mission," noted Al, "is to support North Star's customers *after* they purchase (and then sell) our product."

The Product Support Group services products returned from the customer, according to Manager Ray Detmer. "Our commitment is to repair the product within 30 days, but we generally turn them around in 15 to 20 days," he said.

Technical Services also provides technical advice to customers on the telephone. "Our group is the technical liaison between the customer and the rest of North Star," according to Stephen Kanzler,



*Pictured above is the Technical Services team (in alphabetical order): Toni Andrews, Barry Bearden, Bob Bickford, Bob Cowart, Rosalie Cuevas, David Carvalho, Ray Detmer, Thang Doan, Sandy Ice, Frank Kohzad, Stephen Kanzler, Nabiullah Nabi, Emile Shaffer, Ron Swinhart, Susan Welsh and John Zitz. (Not pictured are Donna McDermott and Al Peterson.)*

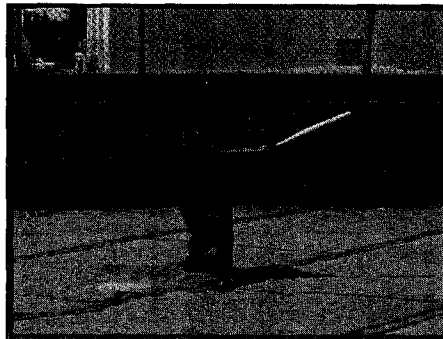
supervisor of Technical Support. His staff has doubled in the last six months, but so have the calls—to more than 500 a week!

In addition, Technical Services constantly interfaces with other North Star departments to provide valuable input during the new product development stage. Perhaps most importantly, Technical Services has a vital public relations role. They do their best to solve sometimes sticky problems, while maintaining North Star's positive image to the outside world. "We don't let them down," says Detmer. "We all take pride in being part of a team that our customers can count on."

## **"North Star's" Gear Up For New Season**

Our softball team, the "North Star's," finished second during this summer's Oakland Softball Season. It was mighty close—the Bay Alarm team won the championship by only one run!

Undaunted, the "North Star's" are already gearing up for the new season and yet *another* championship by practicing Monday nights at Mosswood Field on MacArthur Boulevard.

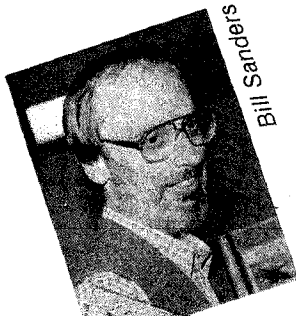


Cheer them on! Check HRD's bulletin board for the schedule. Or, if you're interested in joining the team, contact:

- **Beverly Miranda** (ext. 564)  
or
- **Callie McDaniel** (ext. 663).

## Roving Photographer

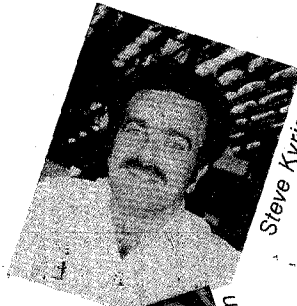
# What's Your Favorite Dessert?



Bill Sanders



Tim Morris



Steve Kyriacou



Joseph Tesfamichael



Bonnie Johnston



Jean Nava



Barry Bearden



Que Dang



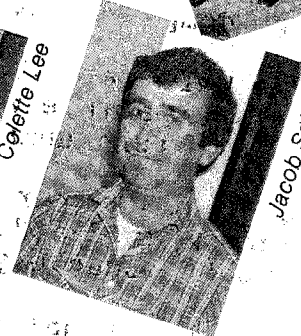
Brad West



Bruce Baldwin



Colette Lee



Jacob Saidian

**Bill Sanders** (Purchasing) *Something with real rich chocolate and real rich coffee to go along with it!*

**Bonnie Johnston** (Marketing Communications) *Oh, that's dangerous... it has to be Bud's coffee crunch ice cream. My second choice is cheesecake with strawberries.*

**Brad West** (Sales Administration) *My favorite dessert has to be beer—Anchor Steam or Dos Equis!*

**Tim Morris** (Finance) *My favorite—baked alaska.*

**Jean Nava** (Production) *Cheesecake with strawberries. I buy it at Nation's in Fremont.*

**Bruce Baldwin** (Warehouse) *I'd have to say my favorite dessert would probably be chocolate mousse.*

**Steve Kyriacou** (Shipping) *I would have to say german chocolate cake ice cream is my favorite. I find it at a gourmet deli in Dublin called Irby's.*

**Barry Bearden** (Technical Services) *My favorite dessert? I'd say strawberries flambe.*

**Colette Lee** (Engineering) *I love desserts, it's just a matter of picking one! My favorite is cheesecake with strawberries on it.*

**Joseph Tesfamichael** (Production) *Honey and ice cream are my favorites.*

**Que Dang** (Marketing) *Fruit. I eat a lot of fruit—bananas, oranges, tropical fruit. I don't like sweets a lot, they're fattening.*

**Jacob Saidian** (Engineering Hardware) *I like ice cream—all flavors.*