



Employee Spotlight

Pauline Laperriere

Our employee spotlight is a special guest. We are working on a legacy project to hear from the generation that worked at the Bomber Plant during World War II. Pauline LaPerriere worked at the Willow Run Bomber

stamped the paperwork and returned the paperwork to the locked and guarded bomb sight room. She was also responsible for inspecting the survival kit aboard each plane. These kits included a blow-up rubber raft, food rations, flashlights and other items to assist the pilot and crew in case they were shot down.

Pauline's feelings that first day walking into Willow Run were no different than the feelings all of us felt on our first day. A huge, somewhat scary building that had us all wondering how we would ever figure out how to get from one place to another without getting lost.

In 1943, the 42,000 plus Willow Run employees were nearly four times greater than the population of the city in which it sat. Every employee was required to wear identical, company issued clothing that consisted of blue slacks and a blue blouse or shirt. Many of the employees were southern transplants, people who were recruited and moved to Michigan to ease the worker shortage. A large part of those transplants came from Kentucky, which gave birth to the phrase "Ypsitucky."

One of the things that really came across in my conversations with Pauline, was the pride and patriotism I heard in her voice as she relived the story of her early years as an employee at the Bomber Plant, some 65 years ago. She spoke of the common goal of all the citizens of this country as they banded together in support of our troops, our government and our country.

The other thing that struck me was how full of life and vitality this delightful 84-year-old lady was. Her employment at Willow Run, along with the war and the production of the B-24 bomber, ended in 1945. Several years later, she was rehired by GM at the Willow Run facility as a secretary in the administration building, where she worked until she retired. Her son, Lyn LaPerriere, continues the family legacy at Willow Run. Lyn works in the spindle room above the F-4 assembly area today and has been a GM employee for 38 years.

Pauline and her husband Joseph, who retired from the Air Force, now reside in Bradenton, Florida, where she continued working until a year ago. Her days are now filled baby sitting her great-grandchildren, going to the beach and going to McDill Airforce Base for pizza and shopping with Joe at the base PX.

Thank you for sharing your story with us, Pauline. God Bless!



Pauline Laperriere

1943

Jacques Cousteau invents the Aqualung or SCUBA (self contained breathing apparatus), which allows divers to carry a portable air supply as they swim and work under water.

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Dow Chemical in Midland, MI, discovers Styrofoam. The foam products are used in everything from disposable cups to housing insulation.

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The antibiotic, Penicillin, is first used to treat chronic diseases. Streptomycin, a more powerful antibiotic is discovered and is used to treat infections resistant to penicillin.

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The world's first Nuclear reactor goes into service in Oak Ridge, TN.

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The Detroit Red Wings sweep the Boston Bruins to win the Stanley Cup.

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The Pentagon is completed and becomes the largest building in the World.

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A car cost \$1,100 if you could find one.

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Bread costs 9 cents a loaf.

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Milk costs 62 cents a gallon.

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An average house costs \$8,000.

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Minimum Wage is 30 cents an hour and the average annual salary is \$2,500.

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A bottle of Coca Cola is 5 cents.

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Future President, **Lt. John F. Kennedy** and the crew of the PT209 are sunk by a Japanese Destroyer.

RAILROADING CROSSES A NEW FRONTIER

THE GREAT YEDY.

WARR have a way of ending old wars and starting new ones. Following the Peace of 1865, the nation was first united from coast to coast by bands of steel (May 30, 1869). Geographically, America has no new frontiers. Technically, she has.

Full point value... no waste, no bone, no surplus fat

SPAM DINNER

GET THE MOST FOR YOUR POINTS

Spam is all meat, all good to eat—no bone, waste or surplus fat to rob you of precious points. Goats with scarcely any shrinkage—and there's a lot for every scrap of left-over. Remember, too, that when you have to eat Spam, it's wise to choose the best cut. Buy it from the best source.

THERE'S SOMETHING NEW IN THE PICTURE

OUT of every war has grown a new era in transportation. This one is no exception. The pattern of that new era had been set, even before this war, by the General Motors Diesel Locomotive. And its Leadership in the Peace to come is forecast in the new picture.