

Robots build planes in futuristic factory

United Press International
LOS ANGELES — People laughed when Don Stansbarger of Northrop Corp. first proposed a factory of the future — making airplanes with robots — but the idea is becoming a reality.

Stansbarger, is Northrop's manager for the Factory of the Future division, said the future factory concept combines the

use of robots and lightweight graphite in the construction of airplanes.

Graphite, in one form, is the soft black carbon in lead pencils. But treated differently, it is a lightweight, strong, tensile material that can be formed and cut like fabric and used for airplane skins.

"It is half the weight and three times as strong and as stiff

as aluminum," Stansbarger said. He said the factory is turning out rudder parts and horizontal stabilizers for the F-18 fighter. The fighter, produced by Northrop and McDonnell Douglas Corp., is now 9 percent graphite, and Stansbarger said he thinks by 1985 it will be 25 percent graphite and eventually 60 percent graphite.

The idea of the robot assembly line came about as Stansbarger struggled with the problem of incorporating non-metallic materials into airplane design.

"I always dreamed of an airplane that was 60 percent graphite in weight," he said. "We started in 1967 working towards that goal."

Northrop found it could not produce on a cost-competitive basis by hand techniques, he said.

So, it purchased a facility from Rockwell International in late 1978.



Twirl your partner

Kelly Gisting, a junior in petroleum engineering from Spring, dances with Jeff Randall, a senior in accounting from Katy. Both are

members of the Aggie Alemander the University square-dancing club. The club dances once a week in the Rollie White Coliseum.

Deaf couple provides help for deaf students

United Press International
DES PLAINES, Ill. — Scott and Deedra Morrison are good role models for their students in the hearing impaired program at Chicago's Whitney Young High School.

The Morrises are deaf. "Because the incidence of deafness is so small (one per 1,000), deaf kids rarely get to see deaf adults," says William Pahle,

the programs acting director. "At the present time, none of our students have deaf parents. They really don't know what a deaf adult is."

Morrison, 31, and his wife, 26, met eight years ago at a school conference for the deaf and were married in 1979.

Both read lips, wear hearing aids and use sign language. His deafness resulted from a

nerve problem. She was born with hers.

The Morrises graduated from Gallaudet College, Washington D.C. He has a master's degree from West Maryland College and is working on hers.


"I would be disappointed if we don't have at least one deaf child," Morrison said, adding that hearing children will "develop their own friendships, their own circle. We be part of their lives, but not point."

"Whereas with a deaf child there would never be anything held from us."

The Morrises said deafness has advantages. Irritating sounds and planes overhead don't bother them.

He said he thinks the deaf drive better than many people with normal hearing because you have to be visually aware of what's happening around you.

Mrs. Morrison said communicating with hearing people is "real hard. A lot of it is guesswork."



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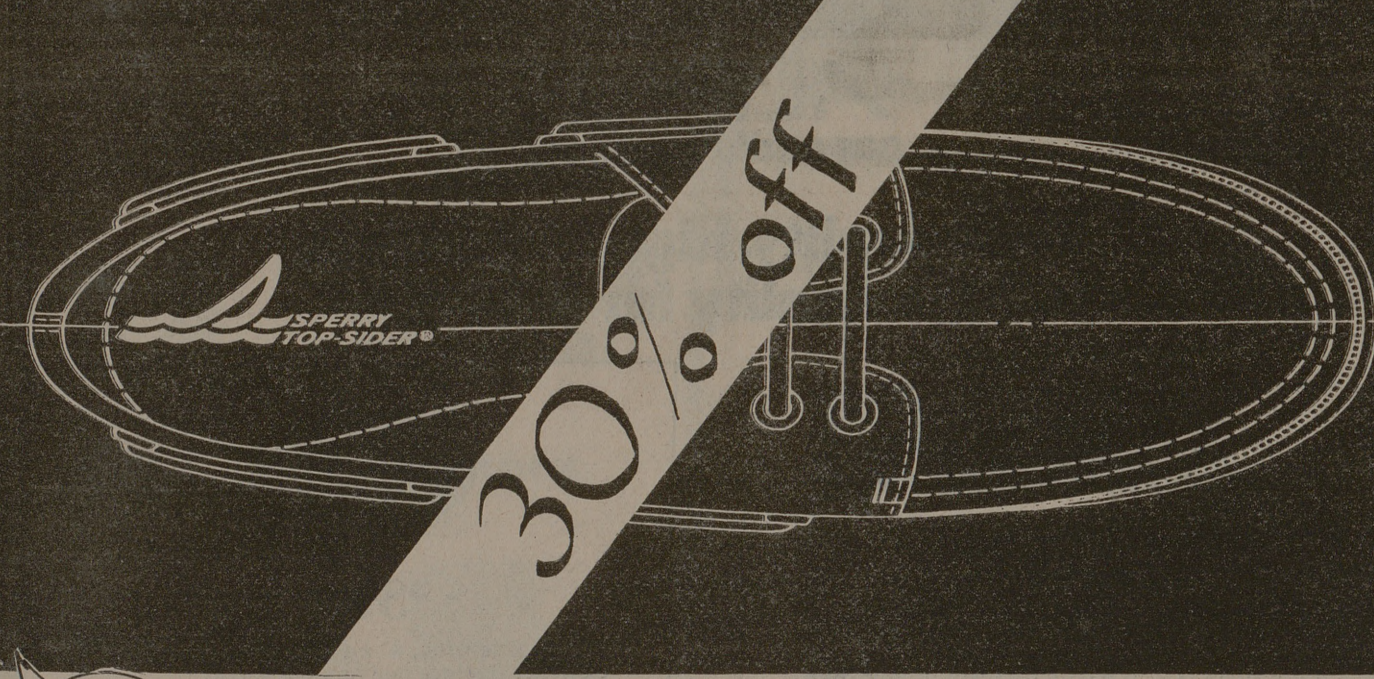
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