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## MY VIEW

# Fred Bonisch: Well-treated employees take pride in their work

Is loyalty in the workplace becoming a thing of the past?

While this may well be the case, retirees of the East Aurora-based company Moog Inc. continue in their founders' tradition. It was the philosophy of the Moog brothers, William and Art, when they started their company in the early 1950s that the employees were the real asset in their new venture.

By providing a working environment that was based on mutual trust between employer and employees, there was never a need for workers to punch time-clocks.

It is easy to see why this philosophy of mutual respect, trust and loyalty has remained throughout all these years. While this relation has made Moog an exceptional place to work, we in the community should take pride in what we still have. Not only does Moog rank among global leaders in technological advances, it also develops and draws the highest technical minds to its facilities.

Moog employees frequently acknowledge their association with their company with a certain degree of pride. To be called a Mooger, however, is an identity that lasts

well beyond one's own years of employment. In fact, for many it will remain a lifelong identity.

A large number of Moog retirees continue their association by meeting for their monthly breakfast get-together every second Wednesday of the month. This tradition has been practiced for many years and all Moog retirees are welcome to join.

What makes this gathering unique is that the retirees meet as previous Moog associates without regard to their previous job differences. Many former associates, who have moved to warmer climates, find these get-togethers an opportune time to catch up with old friends and colleagues when they come home to visit.

It is interesting to hear the attendees reminisce about their experiences during their years with the company, and often the same stories can be heard over and over again. As a retired employee of Moog, it is easy to relate to the many positive experiences the group members so joyfully share. Occasionally, officers of the company are invited as guests, usually for the purpose of informing the group of the company's progress and directions.

This ongoing relationship between management and the retirees has recently resulted in finding more cost-effective health care programs for retirees. Controlling the ever-increasing health care costs is of particular concern for those in their later years with more frequent health issues. It again demonstrates the ongoing loyalty between the management team and the retirees, which has been so much part of the Moog philosophy.

While this kind of relationship has become the exception rather than the norm, it is important that we recognize and encourage these important values for our area industry and its employees. Current economic conditions can easily pull us away from such ideals of respect, trust and loyalty in our workplaces.

Employment can and should mean more than the eight hours we spend on the job each working day. If we have any pride in what we do, we should feel comfortable in making it part of our identity because so much of our life relates to the job we do. For those of us who were fortunate enough to have worked at Moog, we think of this as a positive identity even so well into our retirement years.