



MICHAEL D. POPE/STAFF

Tim George, plant manager for Silver-Line Plastics, and office manager Tammy Stanley stroll through the currently empty 75,000-square-foot addition to the pipe manufacturing plant. George hopes to have the new space in production in November.

## Silver-Line completes expansion

By **STEPHEN ROBERTSON**  
STAFF WRITER  
SROBERTSON@SWOKNEWS.COM

Silver-Line Plastics has essentially completed its 75,000-square-foot building expansion and expects production to begin before the end of the year.

Plant manager Tim George said the city has issued a certificate of occupancy, and only minor construction work remains to be completed. He expects equipment installation to begin in a couple of weeks or so.

"Hopefully, after Thanksgiving we'll be making some pipe out there," George said.

The project — a \$10 million effort that doubled the size of the plastic pipe manufacturing operation — has required considerable coordination and planning because the factory kept turning out pipe during the entire process.

Despite the challenges, the company is on track for completion of the project, and the good news is the company has already added more new employees than it publicly projected and more jobs are coming in the future.

The company secured an \$800,000 loan from the Comanche County Industrial Development Authority, with the money to be repaid by creating — and maintaining, for five years — 19 new jobs. Tammy Stanley, the plant's office manager and personnel director



MICHAEL D. POPE/STAFF

Tim George, plant manager for Silver-Line Plastics, and office manager Tammy Stanley stand in front of the plant's new quality assurance lab, part of a 75,000-square-foot addition. The lab also doubles as a safe room.

(among other jobs) said the company hired 43 people from last November through this August and it has retained 70 percent of them (about 30 people).

"That's huge for us," she said. Part of the high retention, she and George said, can be explained by the training program that's been put in place for new hires.

When the company — based in Asheville, N.C. — opened its new plant here in 2001, it relied upon a rudimentary training system. Essentially, workers from North Carolina trained local hires on the job.

"We knew that wasn't working," Stanley said, "but it was just growing so fast."

Eventually, the company instituted a three-day training program; if workers stayed on they learned more on the job.

For the expansion, Silver-Line took a different tack. In the most recent round of hiring, workers go through a month-long program in which they learn not only production but also a bit of what the other departments, including maintenance and shipping, do.

"We want them to feel like they're part of the whole program," George said.

Much of the training has been overseen by Silver-Line plant employees. George said that accomplishes two purposes: It allows employees to share their

expertise and current employees and new employees get to know each other.

"It's not just 'those folks,' us and them," George said. "It becomes more like family."

That's important, he said, because Silver-Line wants to recruit and hire people who will consider working at Silver-Line a career.

"Some folks just want a job, but many folks are looking for a career," he said.

The training sessions have worked so well, George and Stanley said, that some two-week sessions have been instituted for current employees.

More training is on the horizon. The plant will have a hiring event from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday and Saturday in Building 600 at Great Plains Technology Center, 4500 W. Lee. The company offers \$11-15 an hour to start, with benefits.

The last hiring event in October attracted 300 people.

"We're trying to mimic what we did last year because it worked out so well for us," Stanley said.

The most important qualification is attitude, and not aptitude, experience or training.

"If we can just get good people who have a desire to work ... we can teach them what they need to know," is the motto.

## Military Connection Hiring Event set

By **MITCH MEADOR**  
STAFF WRITER  
MMEADOR@SWOKNEWS.COM

Job seekers and prospective employers will have the perfect opportunity to meet up at an Oklahoma Military Connection Hiring Event on Thursday.

It will last from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the Fort Sill Armed Forces Reserve Center, Building 3955 Cannoneer Field Road. To get there, enter Bentley Gate on Sheridan Road, turn left onto Mow-Way Road and make an immediate left onto Cannoneer Field Road.

If you do not have a Department of Defense-issued ID card, you must obtain a visitor's pass to come onto Fort Sill. You can get one by stopping at the Visitor Center just inside the perimeter fence on the east side of Sheridan Road.

This is the fourth consecutive year that the Oklahoma Military Connection has held an event on Fort Sill. Last year's event was attended by over 300 career seekers and 40 local employers.

"We're very fortunate to have so many military-supportive employers in Oklahoma," said Oklahoma National Guard Employment Coordination Program Director Col. Warren Griffis.

The hiring event is for military members and their spouses, members of the National Guard and Reserve, and veterans. It can provide civilian employment for active-duty



FILE PHOTO

Nalevra Barnett, left, talks with Great Plains career counselor Rhonda Mahffery at the Oklahoma Military Connection hiring event held on Fort Sill in 2014. This year's event will be held Thursday in the Fort Sill Armed Forces Reserve Center, Building 3955 Cannoneer Field Road.

service members who are separating from the military, or weekday employment for Guardsmen and Reservists who need a steady income that will keep them coming to drill weekends and annual training. Military spouses can use it to find jobs while they're stationed here with their service members.

The goal is to have 50 employers who have jobs available now, according to James Taylor, program manager for the Lawton office of Oklahoma Works. It's called a hiring event rather than a job fair because all participating employers must have current job openings.

The event serves not only Lawton but outlying areas as well. There will be some police organizations coming from Texas.

"We have other industries coming in now that we may not have seen before," he added.

There is a new effort this year by a consortium that includes Great Plains Technology Center, Cameron University as well as the U.S. Small Business Administration's Small Business Development Center and other entities to help individuals who want to start their own businesses. This will be done in collaboration with Syracuse University.

One person who did is Sandra Gonzales, founder and president of Docere E-Learning Solutions. She is both a veteran and a military spouse, and she will be present to give others tips on how to follow the road she took.

The deadline to pre-register for the hiring event was last Wednesday. The advantage to pre-registration was that by submitting your resume, you would be matched up with four or five employers who have jobs for someone with your skill sets.

Walk-ins will be accepted, however.

Two workshops were held beforehand to help people exiting the military and veterans update their resumes, dress for job interviews and polish their interview skills. Participation was down this year, but Taylor thinks that may be because of what Okla-

SEE HIRING, 3E

## New tools keep track of minerals being fed

By **VIC SCHOONOVER**  
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Farmers and ranchers are in the lead using modern technology for help in mapping fields for fertilizer uptake, guiding tractors precisely across fields when planting and harvesting, and other chores once done by the use of one's eyes, brain and experience.

Now, using technology developed by Oklahoma State University animal scientists, cattle producers can use two new electronic gizmos to keep better records on cattle mineral consumption. One tool is used to help them keep track of the amount of minerals being fed in each pasture. The other one assists producers in determining the amount of minerals consumed on a per head, per day basis.

Reported by Glen Selk, OSU Extension emeritus livestock specialist, the two new tools, developed by OSU Extension beef team members Chris Richards and Gant Maurer, will help cattlemen make sure proper mineral and vitamin intake will help cattle make good weight gains, have strong immune systems and reproductive performance.

Proper mineral consumption, Selk explained, is critical when it contains chlortetracycline or ionophores. Commercial mineral mixes have a target consumption rate included in the feeding directions, he said.

The tools will allow producers to more closely monitor mineral intake in their livestock and provide opportunities to make adjustments if unsatisfactory consumption is taking place, he said. Both of the tools are available free of charge and can be downloaded from the OSU website, beefextension.com. Go to the right side of the page and click on the appropriate item you wish to download, Selk said. The simple-to-use tools will be extremely helpful to beef cow/calf and stocker calf producers, he said.

### Keeping cattle healthy

**Cattlemen can help their calves stay healthy** and also become used to being handled by people by accomplishing such tasks as vaccinating and worming. And according to Kansas State University Extension beef cattle specialist A.J. Tarpoff, working with the cattle even before calves are weaned will pay off in easier-to-handle cattle.

"Producers who check their cattle often will be able to stay ahead of any problems such as injuries, symptoms of sickness, making sure all of the cattle are still present, and at the same time ensure both cows and calves will become used to the owners' presence and become more gentle," Tarpoff said. "Just walking through the herd once a week or so will pay off with cattle becoming less stressed when they are penned and handled."

He said producers will have a variety of health factors to consider during preconditioning, including vaccines and preventative measures as possible controls for illnesses such as individual parasites, coccidian and worms. He recommends working with your local vet to help prioritize what health risks are important to pay attention to in your area and which ones are not as threatening in order to reduce health-related stress to the herd.



## Home Theaters in The Oaks

Football season is upon us.  
Where are YOU watching the game?  
Call us TODAY to see one of our move in ready homes with a PERSONAL HOME THEATER!

(580) 917-2706

www.TheOaksDevelopmentCo.com

Follow us on Facebook



**THE OAKS**  
Development Company

(580) 917-2706