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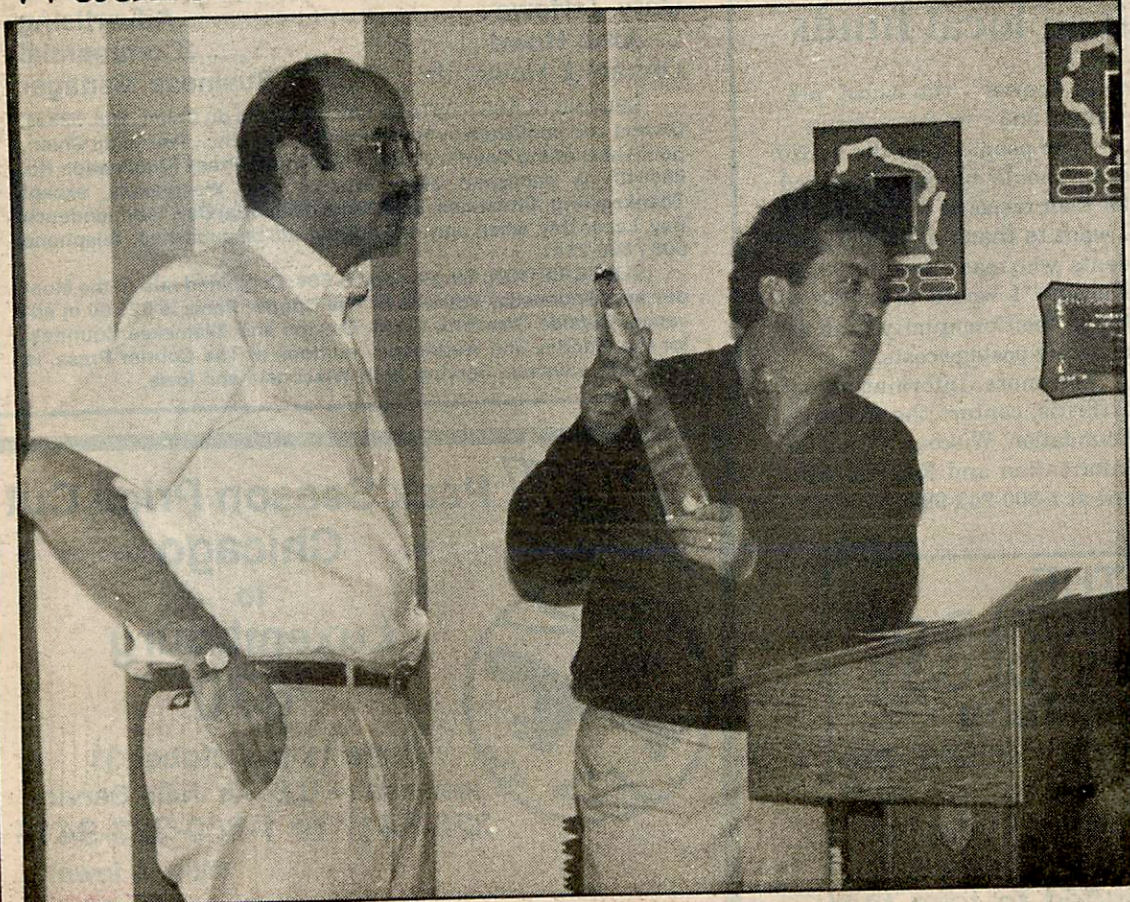
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Wauzeka workers win John Deere vendor award hands down



John Deere Factory Manager Mike Triplett (right) presents the Vendor of the Year Award to Loren Smith, president of Monona Wire.

by Angela Willenbring

"You have set the standard by which we will judge all future contenders for the Vendor of the Year Award," said Mike Triplett to the Monona Wire Corporation in Wauzeka.

Triplett, factory manager of John Deere, Davenport, Iowa, presented Monona Wire with the first ever Vendor of the Year Award Thursday afternoon. He addressed the employees of the plant, saying, "This award is an award to you -- it singles you out among 750 suppliers to the Davenport Works as the single best. Take it as a personal tribute."

Monona Wire President Loren Smith accepted the award on behalf of the company. "This is quite an honor," he said. "This award is for everyone here. For us to get this tremendous honor shows that we are recognized for our worth and value. We are proud to be associated with John Deere and Company."

Triplett commented that above all other suppliers the Davenport factory works with,

Monona Wire implements the theme of partnership with John Deere. "We can say a lot of good things about many of our suppliers --consistent quality, consistently on time with orders, and a solid working relationship. Monona Wire also brings partnership to our work, and that is important to us."

Several members of John Deere accompanied Triplett to the Monona Wire to tour and familiarize themselves with the plant and its employees, including Gene Weber, purchasing analyst; Max Guinn, materials services manager and Jim DeWilde, senior buyer. Monona Wire members assisting the visitors included Brian Gilligan, Tim Wright, Rich Stickler, Keith Kling, Joan Walz, Dan Hurley, Kirk Knudtson, Kevin Eulgem, Shirley Whittle, Cynthia Berger, Linda Knockel and Loren Smith.

As Triplett gave the obelisk Vendor Award to Smith, he added, "This year, it was no contest. Monona Wire won hands down."