

Penn United has grown in good times and bad

## Look Who's 40

Entrepreneurs Charles Barton, Robert Becker and Carl Jones founded Penn United Technologies as a small tool and die shop on May 4, 1971.

Forty years later, the business has grown from three men working on the Jones' family farm in Jefferson Township to more than 550 employees working throughout more than 550,000 square feet of production space.

"When they started this company 40 years ago, they had no idea the company would expand like this," said Bill Jones, president and son of Carl Jones.

To mark the 40th anniversary, Valerie Chittester, assistant marketing manager, said the company is planning "All

American Day." On May 4, Chittester said employees will wear red, white and blue shirts. Lunch will be sold at 1970s-era prices, and snacks will be served.

Since late March, the company has held drawings for gas cards for employees who scored 50 percent or better on a 40-question trivia sheet. Also planned is a companywide lawn lunch celebration this summer. And June 10, the company is sponsoring a trip to the Pittsburgh Zoo for employees and their families.

On a recent tour, business development manager Charlie Phillips explained how customers' demands have driven versatility and expansion of facilities, machines and services.

In addition to tool and

die services, the company offers metal stamping, precision machining, carbide die components, reel-to-reel electroplating, assembly, prototyping, container tooling, tungsten and silicon carbide wear components, and automated equipment manufacturing.

Plus, with the Carl A. Jones Training Center on the main campus, Penn United offers skilled manufacturing training.

"A key part of Carl's original vision was to provide training to even some of our competitors so precision manufacturing would be well known in our geographical area," said Jim Ferguson, director of training for the Learning Institute for the Growth of High Technology, which is

in the center.

He said since the apprentice training program was started on site in 1996, about 500 apprentices have been trained.

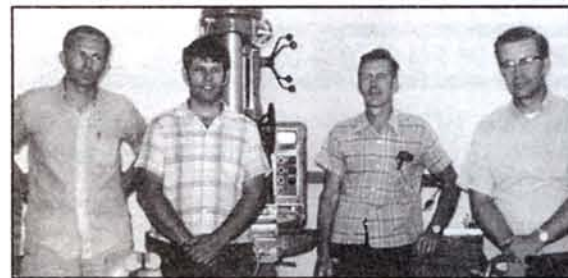
The manufacturer also has diversified to serve the defense, aerospace, medical, automotive, consumer, fluid handling, oil and gas, and energy industries.

All of this activity occurs at four locations: multiple buildings on the main campus on Route 356 in Jefferson Township; Building 10, which is farther south on Route 356; the Penn United Carbide Facility in Saxonburg; and a new facility in Costa Rica.

Although the company experienced two economic slowdowns and the death of its founders during the



Officers of Penn United Technologies are, from left, Barry Barton, vice president of manufacturing; Jerry Smathers, chief financial officer; Bill Jones, president; and Jerry Purcell, vice president of operations.



The original leadership was, from left, Jack Campbell, vice president of sales; and founders Carl Jones, president; Robert Becker, vice president; and Charles Barton, secretary and treasurer.

past decade, it has continued to grow.

Phillips said Penn United is adding to its plating building and is doing more stamping related to the nuclear industry.

Another growth area is its carbide division, which involves baking powdered metal forms to produce high-impact wear resistant parts for many applications, most notably in the oil, gas and fluid handling industries.

Jeff Scales, general sales manager, said Penn United sets itself apart from many carbide producers because it makes preforms and does the grinding in house.

Jerry Purcell, vice president of operations, said one of Penn United's biggest challenges is dealing with unfair trade practices. Both Bill Jones and Dave Fregel, director of government affairs, are involved on many levels to help reform trade regulations and enforce existing ones. ♦



Paul Bergbigler inspects partially assembled bionic wrenches at Penn United Technologies.