NUTS AND BOLTS BUSINESS

A & B Bolt and Supply, Inc.
Ranked #42

BY LESLIE TURK

From 1992 to 1993, A & B saw about a 30 percent increase in business, Dawes says, with revenues climbing from $11.1 million to $14.5 million. The Verot School Road business also benefited from Arco Alaska Inc.'s GHX-2 Project, a major fabrication job at the Port of Iberia. "We furnished all the bolts for that. It was about a two-year project," Dawes says.

The company has been in business since 1977, and Dawes' involvement dates back to 1983, when the retired Seaweld manager bought out one of the company's partners. About a year later, Dawes bought out the remaining partner. Five years after that, the bottom fell out of the industry he served. Dawes, however, wasn't devastated. He didn't have a lot of debt to service, already having paid for the building and the land. "We were able to hang in," Dawes says.

The company may now be poised for expansion. "We're thinking about it, but we haven't made up our minds. Getting the personnel to run it, that's the main reason," Dawes' two sons, Brandon and Scotty, work with him at the Lafayette facility, and he says it is unlikely one of his sons would leave to manage a new operation.

Dawes says A & B recently increased the size of its local facility. "We just added on another 3,000 square feet of warehouse and a pipedown. That brought total warehouse space to 20,000 square feet.

"Right now, we're running about 20 percent ahead of last year. It looks real, real good for this year. We've got a lot of work coming up."

A & B Bolt and Supply is a family operation for Jimmy Dawes (center) and his sons Scotty (left) and Brandon.