

Thursday, June 12, 1980

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market
place

T.J. MAXX has opened a new store at the Miracle Mile Shopping in Bloomfield Hills. Store manager is Karyl Jenkins and assistant managers are Melva Cunningham and Richard Hartwell.

MORE THAN \$2 million was saved last year through the efforts of the Purchasing Consortium of Jewish Hospitals which conducted its quarterly meeting last month at Sinai Hospital of Detroit. Sinai and 16 other Jewish-sponsored hospitals and medical centers around the country belong to the two-year-old consortium, which is one of the largest purchasing cooperatives in the country and represents more than 9,000 hospital beds. For every dollar Sinai invested in Consortium membership fees, \$1,081 will be returned by the end of 1980.

"We feel that in these times of skyrocketing inflation, it is important for hospitals and medical centers throughout the U.S. to attempt new methods of containing or reducing costs. The ongoing efforts of the Consortium have resulted in significant savings thus far and we are confident that this trend will continue," said Irving Shapiro, Sinai's executive vice president.

FOX & CO., a national certified public accounting firm, has relocated its Southfield office to the entire 16th floor of Southfield's 3000 Troy Center Building in order to house all 50 of the firm's employees in one location. The firm recently merged with another public accounting firm. Fox & Co. has offices in 56 cities nationwide. Its Fox Joysome represents clients worldwide.

DAVID Simmons, WRIF Radio's production director, was named a finalist in the 1980 Clio Awards competition for a commercial he produced for Dino's Pizza and CBS Records. Winners will be announced this week in New York and Los Angeles during the Clio Awards Festival. He is noted for his numerous voice characterizations and commercials for many Detroit clients. He joined WRIF in 1975.

DURBIN Co. Realtors of West Bloomfield have affiliated with Neighborhood Realty Group, U.S.A., a national real estate network. Mel Durbin, president of the firm, said the membership will give Durbin professional advertising coverage in the real estate industry. Neighborhood Realty also provides training sessions in finance, banking, construction, real estate law and mortgages. Durbin has seven offices in Oakland County with 100 sales counselors.

Energy for the future

Firm projects business boom

By KATHLEEN MORAN

As Michigan reels from setbacks in its major industry, at least one scientist is looking to another industry to become a major employer and taxpayer in this state.

It will be the energy business, believes Stanford Ovshinsky, the maverick inventor who heads Energy Conversion Devices Inc. in Troy.

The brilliant scientist's headway in the solar energy field could make solar electric cells to Michigan what oil is to Texas and Alaska.

"I think we're going to be the center of a new industry here," said Ovshinsky.

"Just as the automotive industry is centered in Detroit, I think the energy business is going to have a chance at it. "It's got to be a huge industry."

Ovshinsky, a self-taught inventor with more than 70 patents to his name so far, has been conducting research in the field of amorphous materials for 20 years. His "ovonic" materials (named for him) can be used as electronic switches or as memory devices.

When he and his wife, Iris, formed ECD in 1960, research in the energy field was hardly noticed. But the energy crisis has changed that attitude and elevated Ovshinsky's research.

At that time, Ovshinsky, with just a high school diploma, was treated with suspicion by scientists who had followed the traditional path of education. But he has now become the recognized leader in research with amorphous materials.

Amorphous materials are the opposite of crystalline. They lack the near-perfect molecular organization of crystals.

But perfect crystals, the most useful kind, are expensive. Ovshinsky replaces expensive crystals with cheaper amorphous materials.

OVSHINSKY'S DISCOVERIES have led to developments in several areas. Soon, ECD will begin marketing a microfilm machine, for instance, that instantly records an image on a piece of film slightly larger than a 3 by 5 card.

In all, 98 entries can be retained on the card, and additional material can be superimposed on the film.

His film is cheaper because it doesn't use silver or any precious metals and more versatile because it doesn't have to be developed and, thus can be updated instantly.

His amorphous materials can also be used as computer chips. But his chips don't require a constant flow of electricity to retain their memory capabilities. Once disconnected from its power source, the chip retains whatever has been stored into its memory.

But the applications of Ovshinsky's discoveries to the field of solar energy are what have received the most attention. For a nation being squeezed financially by the oil-rich nations, any signs of progress in a field which would



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make us less dependent on oil are greeted with open arms.

And when the Atlantic Richfield Corp. announced it was giving Ovshinsky nearly \$30 million to further his solar research, it appeared an American solution to the energy crisis might be feasible.

Ovshinsky, himself, believes an answer that would make us less dependent on the oil-producing nations is necessary to curb inflation and unemployment — and perhaps avert war.

"We're just going to have to have alternative energy that doesn't depend on the OPEC nations," he said.

HIS SOLUTION lies in solar cells made of amorphous materials. Holding a calculator underneath a machine that duplicates sunlight at noon, Ovshinsky can illustrate the practical application of his discovery.

The calculator works as if using a battery. The same amount of sunlight can power a watch.

Both, of course, are simple illustrations of his achievement: a method for converting sunlight into electricity.

Until now, practical solar energy has meant converting sunlight into heat. That technology had been available for years but began to be put to use as the energy crisis struck.

But creating "solar electricity" has been dismissed as an entirely too expensive process. Until ovonics came on the scene, the ability to convert sunlight into electricity was restricted to a process which is 20 times more expensive than Ovshinsky's.

"We've been able to take sunlight and make it competitive to coal, gas, oil and uranium, which is a very important statement to make these days,"

said the 57-year-old Ovshinsky.

The interest of an oil company in alternative energy sources isn't new, says Ovshinsky, but ARCO is more progressive than other companies.

"ARCO is really a different kind of

oil company," he said. "I think they're far more progressive. They're worried about the effect of energy on our society."

"Other oil companies would have tried to take us over. We were able to work out an equitable arrangement with ARCO so that our independence is assured."

THE ARCO grant will enable Ovshinsky to expand his facilities and, hopefully, speed up the research. ECD has leased space in three buildings, totaling 25,000 square feet, and broke ground this week for a 10,000-square-foot addition to its Troy plant. Together with the two buildings on its Maple Road site, ECD will have 56,000 square feet of space for its research and production areas.

The number of employees has increased considerably since the ARCO grant was announced in January: from 80 to more than 160. And Ovshinsky hopes to double that figure by this time next year.

That's a far cry from the two employees of 20 years ago, Stanford and Iris Ovshinsky, who couldn't interest anyone in energy research.

datebook

SECRETARY of State Richard Austin will be the featured speaker before the Michigan Association of Certified Public Accountants Metropolitan Detroit Chapter of Members in Government, Industry and Education June 20. The 8 a.m. breakfast meeting will be at the Somerset Inn in Troy. Austin will discuss "Challenges in Our Political and Government Arena." For reservations, contact the association's office at 383-0404.

THE FIFTH Annual Automotive News World Congress will be July 27-30 featuring 34 top level managers from the automotive world and relative fields. Thomas Murphy, chairman of General Motors, will be keynote speaker discussing the state of the industry, present and future. John DeLoe, chairman of DeLoe Motors, will provide an update on his DMC-12 project, and U.S. Rep. John Dingell will talk about the pros and cons of government regulation. The four-day conference will be at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Dearborn. Registration is \$395. For more details, contact Cynthia Radon at Automotive News, 567-9520.

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