

Hunters stalk executive talent

By Tom Baer
and Doug Funke
Staff writers

BEWARE, ALL YOU missionaries of the corporate denomination. Headhunters have been spotted plying their trade in a one-story, redwood-sided hut at 2525 Crooks Road in that part of the suburban jungle known as Troy.

Their fires are banked, their cauldrons are bubbling over and their spears are sharp. And it's your head they may be after.

But never fear. Your noggin isn't going to become a shrunken trophy on some savage's waist. You just may find yourself a few rungs higher on that ladder of success thanks to their efforts.

These latter-day headhunters are clad in business suits, not loincloths. Instead of blowing poison darts, they dial telephones. In fact, some of these civilized folks really resent being called headhunters.

"Search and recruiting specialist" is what one of them, Larry Gipson, prefers. It's on his business card along with his company — Career Forum. He's one of 12 headhunters and a headhunting to do business in the same building.

HEADHUNTERS ARE job placement specialists for middle- and upper-management types, who may want to swing from one high-powered position to another. Headhunters provide the vines for such swinging.

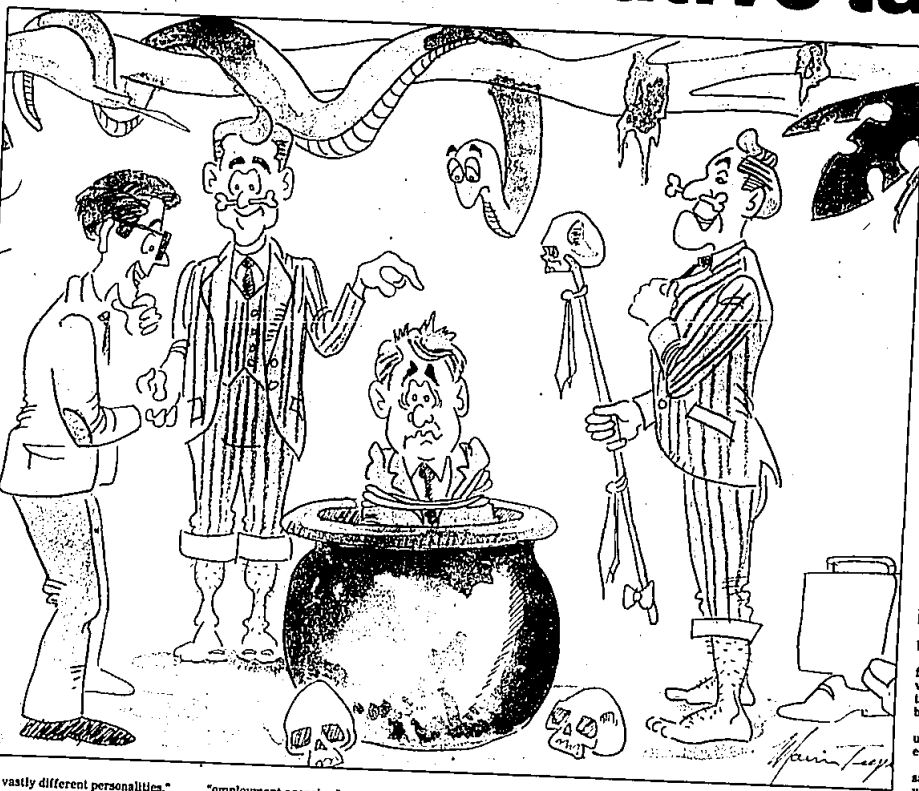
A headhunter "surfaces candidates" for an employer, according to Don Oshrock, a "search specialist" whose company is called The Trident Group.

"In other words, we'd get an order from an employer telling us he's looking for, say, a chief financial officer with certain specifications," said Oshrock, who co-owns the building with his partner. "Then we'd go out and find this person for him."

Candidates are surfaced (heads hunted) in the best gumshoe tradition of pounding pavements, putting miles on tires and pushing telephone buttons. Hours are long — no 9 to 5 jobs here.

"We do a lot of phone calling," said Hans Becker, whose firm bears his name. "For example, if I talk to you, and you say you're interested, well I can't want to take your company's time, so I'll say, 'Why don't I give you a call at home tonight?'"

Added Oshrock, "It's a pressure business. You get it from the employers and from the candidates. Often you're trying to bring together two people



with vastly different personalities."

NOT ALL headhunters are held in high esteem by the neogals who manage the hunting grounds.

An executive of a large corporation in Southfield made the distinction between legitimate executive search firms and what he distastefully calls

"employment agencies."

"Sometimes they're regarded about the same way vacuum cleaner salesmen are," the executive said of the latter group. "I have my secretary trained to screen these people out. I won't even talk to them."

But Becker, who claimed to have had his own head hunted more than once

during his days as an executive, defended his profession.

"No one's going to come for us unless he or she is unhappy where he or she is," he said. "In other words, if you have a happy employee, I could stand on my head . . . and it wouldn't prompt that employee to leave the company."

If the employee is unhappy (maybe

he or she feels limited in advancement or underpaid for what he or she does) then, of course, he's ready to come and talk to me.

"QUITE SIMPLY, we tell them about a position that's open. If they're interested, they'll talk to us."

Ken Bumbales, whose business card

identifies him as a recruiter for the Bumbales Group, is a recruiting specialist who objects to the term headhunter.

"If a company is taking good care of people, they should have no worry," he said. "People we're trying to locate for whatever reason — more opportunity, more growth, more potential, more money — we can put into higher organizations."

"When I place somebody, I expect them to stay there for their entire careers," Bumbales added.

Bumbales said he gets 80 percent of his clients from cold-call speculation. It's more difficult, he said, finding Mr. or Ms. Right to fill positions.

"I'll probably make up to 85 phone calls and talk to people not normally looking to make a change, but may be interested in a better opportunity for themselves."

Business directories are primary sources.

"I would say there's a 90 percent chance just in terms of walking off the street, I won't be able to help a person," Bumbales said.

"We're geared for very specific assignments."

MOST HEADHUNTERS enter the profession with extensive business careers behind them. Oshrock was a regional sales manager for an insurance company. Bob Ransdell, another occupant of the Crooks building, was president of a medium-sized company.

Bumbales, an auditor for a major accounting firm for four years and employed by a larger recruiting company for 3½ years, has been in business for himself about six months.

"I always wanted to be my own boss," he said.

Added Oshrock, "We draw people from many different fields. The more varied their background is the better they're able to apply their skills to our business."

Now, about the headhunters' fee. It's usually based on the salary of the hunt and paid by the employer.

"We top off at 30 percent," Becker said. "In other words, for a \$20,000 a year salary, our fee would be 30 percent, and it's guaranteed for 60 calendar days."

"That means that if the employee leaves of his own accord or is terminated during the first 60 days, we have to return the fee."

Headhunting activities came to light a few years ago during economic hard times in the smokestack industries of the Midwest.

INSIDE ANGLES

Know someone doing something notable? Let us know. Write: Inside Angles, Farmington Observer, 32203 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

DOUGLAS GAYNOR was presented with the Fellowship Award by the Michigan Recreation and Park Association. This award was given for his outstanding contribution to the association and for the betterment of parks, recreation and forestry. Gaynor, Farmington Hills' first director of Parks and Recreation, has seen that department grow from a one-person operation to the present Department of Special Services with 20 full-time employees, a \$1-million budget and 300 acres of parks in less than 10 years under his leadership. Gaynor has had a strong commitment to MRPA since he began his career in 1967. He has chaired many committees and served the Board of Directors as board member, treasurer, second vice president, first vice president and as president in 1982. He has also been active in the National Recreation and Park Association on the Great Lakes Regional Council and as chairperson of the Council of Affiliate Presidents.

REGISTRATIONS for the 1985 South Farmington Baseball and Softball Program will be 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 6 and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 9 at Farmington High School. New registrars to the league must bring a birth certificate. A parental signature is required on all registration cards. The South Farmington Baseball and Softball Program is open to boys ages 7-16 and girls ages 8-18. For further information, call Jim Hudson, 474-5709.

DARCIE GOULETTE, a 1983 graduate of Harrison High School and a Central Michigan University sophomore, has been elected treasurer of the Alpha Phi chapter of Sigma Sigma Sigma, a national sorority. Darcie, an accounting major, has also been elected to the dean's list.

PVT. JAMES R. MINEWEEGER, son of Robert and Edna Mineweager of Farmington and a 1983 graduate of Farmington High School, has completed basic training at Fort Knox, KY.

NANCY ELLEN PROCHASKA, Philip Ward, Vicki Lynn Goodman, Lorraine Ann Kaminski, Thomas Spahn and Linda Harpe, from the Farmington area, have been named to the dean's list at Western Michigan University.

MAGGIE BAHLER, daughter of Charles and Janet Bahler of Farmington Hills and a 1981 graduate of Mercy High School, has been appointed an administrative assistant at Lauer Associates Inc. She recently received her bachelor's degree in advertising from the University of Michigan.

MICHELE KRASNEWICH, daughter of Charles and Irene Krasnewich of Farmington Hills

and a graduate of Mercy High School, recently graduated cum laude from the University of Michigan with a bachelor of fine arts degree.

CATHERINE ABUNASSAR and Margaret Sugrue of Farmington have been named to the dean's list at Marquette University.

MARGARET HINER and Suzanne Howley, graduates of North Farmington High School, have pledged the Chi Omega Sorority at Hillsdale College.

DEBORAH M. HOUSER of Farmington Hills has been named to the dean's list at the University of South Alabama.

PHILIP B. LYNCH, son of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Lynch of Farmington and a 1984 graduate of Farmington High School, is a 1985 recipient of the William J. Branstrom Freshman Prize. The award is given annually to freshman students at the University of Michigan whose academic achievement during their first semester on campus places them in the upper 5 percent of their college class.

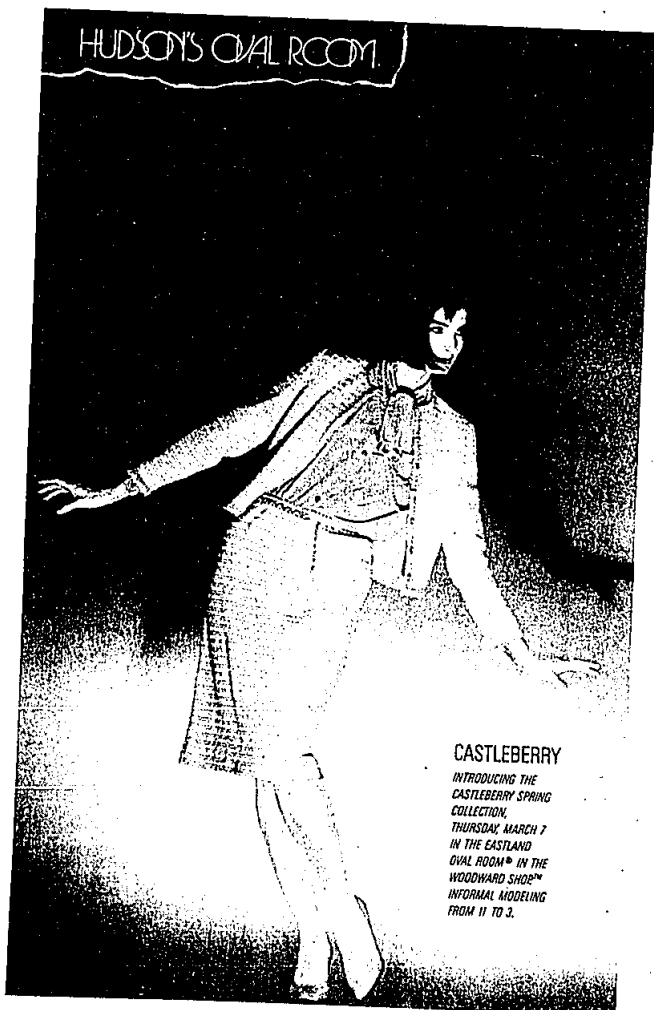
LISA ANN CARPENTER, a 1979 graduate of Farmington High School, has been advanced to Petty Officer and stationed with the Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron 10, at the Naval Air Station at San Diego, Calif.

RENEE BOWLES, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bowles of Farmington, recently received the Hopwood Award at the University of Michigan. She had to submit 10 poems that she had written. Renee is majoring in nursing and also loves to write. She tries to include a poetry class each term along with her nursing classes.

JAMES S. FANZINI of Farmington Hills has been named to the College of Business Administration dean's list at Butler University.

DANIEL TOBOCMAN of Farmington Hills and a Cranbrook School senior has been named an award winner by the Michigan Section of the Mathematical Association of America. He placed in the top 100 out of 23,000 high school students participating in the 28th Annual Michigan Mathematics Prize Competition.

DAN ROSS, a senior at Farmington High School, has won a \$8,000 music scholarship from Interlochen Allstate Band and Orchestra. He will use the scholarship at the University of Michigan Music School next fall. The French hornist also won an honorable mention from the National Foundation for the Advancement of Arts when he competed against 3,000 students in the foundation's "Arts Recognition and Talent Search." Ross was one of seven student musicians from Michigan who won an award in that competition.



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