

# Lots of little auto changes can make future livable

Theoretically, the crisis in the Gulf is mainly of concern to the Japanese and Europeans, who in normal times get almost all of the oil exports from the Midwest. Meanwhile, we are, too literally, swimming in oil, despite the bombing, embargoes and damage to refineries.

Regardless, I still find myself waking up in the middle of the night wondering if all this is worth it. Whether, in fact, there is some way of maintaining our highly mobile lifestyle with some degree of energy independence.

It's occurred to me that we've been caught up on this issue for several decades now, with lots of avenues explored, none very far. In the

late 1970s, there were hundreds of proposals for so-called "alternate" fuels, engines or automobiles. Most worked, a few worked well, but none worked cheaply.

PARTICULARLY, none worked as cheaply as a piston engine fueled by oil that dropped in price on the world market with every hiccup in OPEC. Remarkable progress was made in those days in increasing the basic efficiency of the engines, but all eventually ended, restrained by the physical law that decrees that it takes energy to accelerate mass.

Weight and size lured the Japanese and Europeans, with the result that imports — that portion of the



auto talk  
**Dan McCosh**

fleet that used to represent an almost anachronistic approach to fuel economy — eventually converged with a steadily improving domestic car fleet.

It should be obvious by now that the cost of fuel is never going to do much in the way of changing habits of energy consumption unless, of

course, it jumps as horrendously in price as, say, car insurance or interest charges. There seems to be nothing on the immediate horizon that will revolutionize this industry. Rather, we seem to be facing a slow conversion of what has been everyman's dream of personal freedom to a strangled luxury item.

BUT THE curious thing is that we do have the capability to solve some of the problem, a little bit at a time. Some extremely promising technology has come into being in just the past few years. One is the potential of methanol fuel to replace gasoline some of the time.

Methanol, refined from coal or natural gas, is more or less independent from the need to import foreign oil. Its production in large quantities would release substantial amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, but in many ways it is cleaner burning than gasoline.

One can, in fact, fuel cars using natural gas, ethanol (grain alcohol) or propane — all more or less avail-

able, although considerably more costly than a buck a gallon. That's before you consider the recent interest in electric cars as a means to use the energy of burning coal to get you to work.

At the moment, none of these programs seems likely to succeed without some kind of favoritism or subsidy. Not surprisingly, none is palatable to an auto industry struggling to sell cars that still turn the cheapest fuel of all.

Still, it seems to me that markets could be created, niches filled, and bit by bit we could develop at least some fleets that don't burn the stuff that now flows like blood in the Persian Gulf.

## More products in Ziebart's future

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rustproofings per month while most domestic dealers average 1,000 per year, Hartmann said.

Six franchises had been operating in the Middle East — three in the United Arab Emirates, one each in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Egypt — but none has been heard from since the U.S. launched air attacks Jan. 16, Hartmann said.

ABOUT 50 percent of Ziebart International's business now is rustproofing, the other 50 percent car care, detailing and accessories.

The goal is one-third rustproofing, one-third accessories and one-third car care, Hartmann said.

"We feel that's a good blend of services that can be handled by dealers," Hartmann said. "As well as it is, you don't want to make it too

complicated because training and quality control becomes too difficult. We may pick up some products and drop others."

Radiator repair and installation of sliding windows on pickup trucks were among the services implemented, then dropped by the company.

Decisions to diversify over the years weren't that difficult to make, Hartmann said, adding that more

businesses than might immediately come to mind have done so.

"Markets continually change," he said. "McDonald's started out selling hamburgers. Now you can get chicken, salads and sandwiches." Last year, Ziebart International reported dealer sales in the U.S. and Canada of more than \$100 million, plus an additional \$50 million in the rest of its foreign markets.

## datebook

### COLEMAN IN B'HAM

Thursday, Jan. 31 — Coleman Young addresses Birmingham Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce meeting at 11:30 a.m. in Birmingham. Non-member fee: \$30. Information: Jennifer Stansberry, 540-7557.

### REAL ESTATE WORKOUTS

Thursday, Jan. 31 — Free real estate workouts workshop 3-6 p.m. in Southfield. Information: 396-3483. Sponsor: Deloitte & Touche.

### OAKLAND CHAMBER

Thursday, Jan. 31 — Oakland County Chamber of Commerce meets in Troy. Information: 644-1229.

### GMAT PREPARATION

Saturdays, Feb. 2 through March 2 — Graduate Management Admissions Test preparation workshop 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. near Rochester. Fee: \$175. Information: 370-3120. Sponsor: Oakland University.

### CUSTOMER SERVICE

Monday, Feb. 4 — "Eliminate the Competition: Customer Service Strategies" 7:30-9:30 p.m. in West Bloomfield. Fee: \$5. Information: Joyce Weiss, 681-5831. Strategies" 7:30-9:30 p.m.

### PAYING FOR COLLEGE

Wednesday, Feb. 6 — "Meeting the Costs of a College Education" 7:30-9:30 p.m. in Birmingham. Fee: \$12. Information: 644-5832. Sponsor: The Community House.

### ESTATE PLANNING

Wednesday, Feb. 6-27 — "Investing Wisely: Financial Estate Planning" 7:30-9:30 p.m. in Birmingham. Fee: \$34. Information: 644-5832. Sponsor: The Community House.

### DALE CARNEGIE

Wednesday, Feb. 6 — Dale Carnegie Orientation course 6:30-8 p.m. in Southfield. Fee: \$700. Information: Denise Moody, 353-4500. Sponsor: American Society of Employees.

### DBASE III PLUS INTRO

Wednesday, Feb. 6-27 — "Introduction to dBase III plus" offered 7-9 p.m. in Bloomfield Hills. Fee: \$85.

Information: 645-3635. Sponsor: Cranbrook Schools.

### FIGHTING RECESSION

Thursday, Feb. 7 — "Prospering in a Recession" 7:30-9:30 p.m. in Birmingham. Information: 644-5832. Sponsor: The Community House.

### LOTUS 1-2-3

Thursday, Feb. 7 — Introduction to Lotus 1-2-3 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in Southfield. Non-member fee: \$225. Information: Denise Moody, 353-4500. Sponsor: American Society of Employees.

### FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE

Thursday, Feb. 7 — "Establishing Independence over your Finances: Whether Single or Married" begins at 7:30 p.m. in Bloomfield Hills. Fee: \$125. Information: Jane Fasang, 645-3635. Sponsor: Cranbrook Schools.

### INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Thursday, Feb. 7 — Industrial Relations Research Association meets. Information: 643-8997.

### DIRECT MARKETING

Thursday, Feb. 7 — Direct Marketing Association meets in Southfield. Information: 258-8863.

### LOTUS INTERMEDIATE

Thursday, Feb. 7-28 — Lotus 1-2-3 Intermediate 7-9 p.m. in Bloomfield Hills. Fee: \$85. Information: Jane Fasang, 645-3635. Sponsor: Cranbrook Schools.

### PROFESSIONAL WOMEN

Friday, Feb. 8 — Professional Women's Network meets in Farmington Hills. Information: 473-2299.

Information for this column should be sent to the business editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

Information must be received by Monday to be published in the Thursday issue. Publication cannot be guaranteed.

Information should contain a daytime telephone number where information can be verified.

## business people

Susan Carina Nystrom of Bloomfield Hills was elected to shareholder status at the law firm of Butzel Long.

Michael J. Tepatti was appointed general manager of Detrex Corp.'s Solvents and Environmental Services Division.

Gerald E. Hart of Bloomfield Hills was appointed vice president — corporate marketing at Fruehauf Trailer Corp.

Dr. Derrick Anthony Williamson of Southfield joined the staff at Providence Hospital, Southfield.

Mark C. O'Brien was appointed creative entrepreneur specialist for Partners for Business Success.

Karen Stone of West Bloomfield was named the new office manager at Dennis R. Green & Associates.

Philip D. Tall was appointed general manager for Charley's Seafood Tavern in West Bloomfield.

Dr. John Arthur Feenster of Southfield joined the department of emergency medicine at Providence Hospital, Southfield.

Marc S. Willner was named director of reinsurance at Meadowbrook Insurance Group of Southfield.

Douglas A. Booth joined Jay Alix & Associates as a senior associate.

Andrew J. Croccholo was named general manager of the Northfield Hilton.

Dr. Jeffrey A. Dash of Farmington Hills joined the staff at Providence Hospital, Southfield.

Anne Marie McPhail was named director of catering at the Northfield Hilton.

Patricia Bordman of Farmington Hills was named an associate at Clark, Klein & Beaumont.

Alan S. Levine of West Bloomfield was elected to shareholder status at the law firm of Butzel Long.

Dr. Kang-Lee Tu of West Bloomfield joined the medical staff at Providence Hospital, Southfield.

Joseph C. Bastian Jr. was promoted to vice president of finance and chief financial officer of Allied-Signal Automotive, succeeding Donald A. Proehl, who will retire in 1991 after 40 years of service.

Robert B. Law of Farmington Hills was named executive vice president and chief operating officer of WellCorp Inc., a wholly owned for-profit subsidiary of Comprehensive Health Services Inc., Detroit.

Thomas Anton, executive vice president of Kelly Services Inc. of Troy and chief operating officer of Kelly Temporary Services, announced his retirement effective June 30, 1991.

Carolyn Fryar, senior vice president of Kelly Temporary Services of Troy becomes general manager of Kelly's major metropolitan cities division. Noel Wheeler, vice president

of the company, becomes managing director of the company's international division with operations in Canada, United Kingdom, Ireland, France, Denmark, the Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand. Robert Barrow will assume responsibility for Kelly's smaller city markets as senior vice president of Kelly Temporary Services and general manager of this new division.

David Rawden of West Bloomfield joins Jay Alix & Associates as an associate of the suburban Detroit-based firm of corporate turn-around experts and insolvency specialists.

Tim McAlear was appointed to president and chief executive officer of Pay Less Drug Stores Northwest. Inc. Pay Less is a wholly owned subsidiary of Kmart Corp. of Troy.

Richard Pearce joined Allied Signal Automotive as vice president of technical program management.

F. Kevin Brownell was appointed to senior director of pharmacy operations, and Marianne Howard was appointed to director of creative production at Kmart Corp. in Troy.

Kenneth Abraham joined the Complete Appraisal Co., a Southfield appraisal firm that serves all of lower Michigan as chief appraiser with responsibility for quality control.

Gretchen Cosner was named office manager for McCann/SAS advertising agency in Troy, where she will be responsible for the company's administrative support, human resource and organizational functions.

David L. Rice joined Somerset Pontiac in Troy as a sales representative.

William A. Lawson was elected vice chairman of the board for Newcor Inc. of Troy. He has been a director of Newcor since 1988.

Jay A. Sandler was appointed director of air brake and control systems at Rockwell WABCO Vehicle Control Systems, Troy.

Kenneth Rosen of Southfield, associate of Kitch, Saurbier, Drutehas, Wagner & Kenney, passed the Michigan State Bar examination.

Charles P. Kessler was named director of Kessler & Associates Inc., Farmington Hills.

Michael Hirsch of West Bloomfield joined the Detroit office of Coopers & Lybrand as senior director in its audit department.

Please submit black-and-white photographs, if possible, for inclusion in this column. While we value the receipt of photographs, we are unable to use every photograph submitted. If you want your photograph returned, please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Indicate in a margin on the front of the photograph that you want it returned. We will do our best to comply with your request. Send information to: Business Editor, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150. Please include city of residence and a daytime telephone number where information can be verified.

## marketplace

English Gardens received five awards for environmental improvement from the Metropolitan Detroit Landscape Association. English Gardens earned three silver awards: one for residential landscape construction over \$5,000, two for residential landscape construction over \$10,000,

and one gold award for residential construction over \$20,000.

Rockwell International was a co-winner of the 1990 award for Most Innovative Use of Plastics for Interior-Body from the automotive division of the Society of Plastics Engineers.

Rockwell received the award for its glass mat thermoplastic composite knee bolster for passenger cars for Chrysler Motors.

J.E. Sandrich Advertising Inc. of Troy was selected by the Automotive Electronic Components Division

of Omron Electronics Inc. to design and construct a trade show booth.

Coldwell Banker Schweitzer Real Estate has moved two Northville offices to 41869 Six Mile Road, between Haggerty and Northville Roads.

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**Thursday, February 7**  
9:00 A.M. — 7:00 P.M.  
Marquis, 160 W. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48007  
Reservations: 313-645-6400

**Saturday, February 9**  
9:00 A.M. — 5:00 P.M.  
Plaza, 210 S. Woodward, Suite 250, Birmingham  
Reservations: 313-645-6400

Speaker: Charles R. Ammerman  
Senior Vice President, PaineWebber

For reservations call Amy at 313/645-6400 or (800) 331-5149.

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