Group pushes design for Michigan economy

If almost everybody changes the way they think about almost everything the Michigan economy will be able to do almost any-

will be able to do almost anything.
So says Doug Ross, the director of Michigan Futures, a South-field-based think tank that has striven for the last 18 months to see how the state might reconfigure its economy to perform admirably in a new economic order that's already taking root around the country.

that's already taking root around the country.

Ross, 50, of Farmington Hills, is a former state commerce department director in the Blanchard Administration and a potential appointee of President-elect Bill Clinton.

In fact, the ideas espoused by Michigan Future were sufficiently popular that Ross was invited to Clinton's conomic consensation of Clinton's concents excercing the Clinton's concents consensation of Clinton's concents were resulted to the Clinton's concents consensation of Clinton's concents when the contract of the Clinton's concents consensation of Clin

More skill, more money

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The gist of it is that mass production of identical products by relatively unskilled workers must give may to automation and flexible manufacturing of products customized to the demands of individual customers. That way, Ross said, the workers have to be more skilled and can therefore earn more money.

"(Nowadays) anything that, done routinely can either be automated, or there are people all over the Third World willing to do those same things for a buck an hour." Ross said. "That way of making things is becoming obsolete in all the advanced countries. If we stay in the mass production business, we're finished."

As an example, Ross said cithat.

question becomes . . . How do you get manufacturers and politicians to make the necessary changes?

clams to make the necessary changes? Well, it's kind of a grass-roots thing, Ross sold, and Michigan Future is tending lawns all over Michigan with a slide-show prentation and lecture designed to spread the word about how everything has to change.

The main goal is to modify the way people think about manufacturing, schooling and almost crything class. It's a vision thing. "Onco we can imagine what wo want to be it gets much easier to figure out how to get there," Ross seid.

figure out how to get there," Ross said.

The slide-shows are available to almost any group of any site that shows any interest. However, Ross said you should have at least 30 people together before he'll come out and make his pitch. The group can be anything from a neighborhood association to a chamber of commerce because Michigan Future believes that every aspect of life in Michigan has to be in on this change for it to work right. (Call 645-0860).

Politicians love parades

Although government people have been cautious so far about what Michigan Future proposes,

Ross figures that once you convince enough regular people of your plan, then the politicians have no choice but to get on board. "You can always count on politicians to jump in front of the parade," he said.

At least one politician has elready joined the parade. Bryan Amann, a Democrat Wayne County commissioner representing Canton, said, "The stuff (Ross) talks about ought to give hope to the people of Wayne County. Michigan Future is inexplicably linked with Wayne County's future. That group is showing that you can do certain things through progressive policies that aren't punitive."

Michigan Future is a non-profit, non-partisan group born in the

Michigan Future is a non-profit, non-partison group born in the summer of 1991. Its 1992 budget, funded by foundations and corporations, is \$220,000.

Included on the board of directors are: Dwight Carlson, president of Farmington Hills-based Perceptron, Inc., James Brickley, state supreme court judge, Rick Inatome, president of Troy-based InaCom Computers, and Beverly Wolkow, excutive director of the Michigan Education Association.



The vision thing: If Michigan is going to prosper in the new technology-based economy, inhabitants must have a "vision" of where they're going, said Doug Ross, the di-rector of Michigan Future, Inc.

Recycle trees at a county park

Don't put your Christmas tree curbside after the helidays, recycle it at the Oakland Gounty Parks.
Yule trees will be accepted Jan.
3-3 and Jan. 9-10 at nine Oakland County Parks. Drop-off hours are 9 a.m. 4 p.m.
New this war, roping and wreaths will be accepted. All metal materials must be removed. Plastic used to transport trees must also be removed at recycling sites. No commercial trees will be accepted.
Recycling sites include Red

accepted.
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Oaks Golf Course in Medison
Heights; Addison Oaks near Oxford; Glen Oaks Golf Course in
Farmington Hills; Groveland

Oaks near Holly: Independence Oaks near Clarkston; Orion Oaks in Orion Township; Springfield Oaks Activities Center in Davis-burg; Waterford Oaks in Water-ford; and White Lake Oaks Golf Course near Pontiae. No park entry fee will be charged to drop-off Christmas trees.

charged to drop-oll Christimas trees.

"People are aware of the dramatic impact recycling hea and are acting responsibly as stewards of their planet," Dan Stencil, chief of park operations, said.

For their efforts, recyclers will carn a coupon for free vehicle entry to the April 24 Earth Fair at the Independence Oaks Nature Center. There, they can obtain a

free pine seedling, compliments of the Hoo Hoo Club of Detroit. The club is a lumber industry organi-zation.

The recycled trees are chipped and used on nature trails and for nucleh and compost.

The recycling Christmas tree program is also sponsored by Bor-dine's Better Blooms of Clarkston and Rochester.

dine's Better Blooms of Clarkston and Rochester.

Meantime, start saving used automobile oil, olf litters and lead acid batteries. Those recyclable tems will be collected during the Earth Fair. The Nature Center does not accept recyclable items at any other time.

For more datalls and exact park locations, call 858-0906.

Volunteers sought to help kids

The Oakland County Youth As-istance Volunteer Program is ooking for adult mentors to help

kids.

Two training sessions have been scheduled to teach volun-

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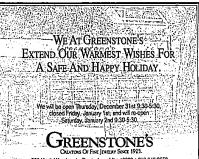
ly. The sessions will occur 7-9 p.m.

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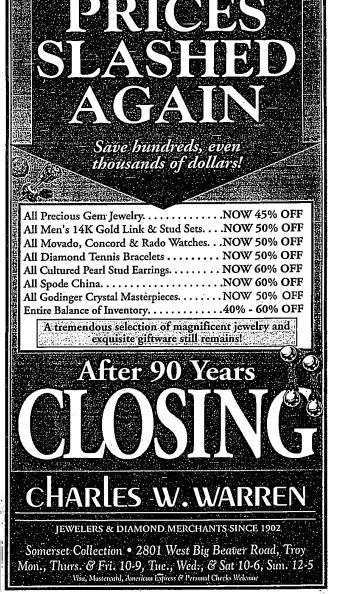
Those are the words Neil Johnson, of Livonia, used to describe the response to his recent Observer & Eccentric Classified ad. He was very pleased with the results.

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Time is running out...