OAKLAND BUSINESS & Finance

One Stop Shop serves as economic stimulus

BY SUSAN TAUBER

TO YOU MATER

a specific size building in the light size of property for sale.

If so, or if you have other questions involving any part of Oakland County, then the newly opened Development and Planning Customer Service Center in the place to contact at (810) 858-0720.

The Development and Planning Customer Service Center opened the end of August in order to be, as Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson callett, a "One Sup Shop" for businesses needing planning and economic development assistance. It a second inside the main door it the Oakland County Executive Office only Decentive Office Oakland County Executive Office Building, 1200 N. Telegraph,

Pontiac.
"The center is set up to be a support service to businesses,"
Patterson said. "It brings to the
table a variety of experts to help

businesses in Oakland County succeed. This is a full-service center without equals." The One Stop Shop offers assistance with site location, export development, capital asset and equity financing, loan application review, tax and cost comparisons, permit and regulatory assistance, economic statistics, demographics, amall business support, job training, market research, alt design, architectural considerations, maps and aerial photographs and more.

Patterson said the idea for the Patterson said the idea for the center came from an Oakland County Business Round Table meeting in February. "The alacrity In which we moved speaks well about the talent in Oakland County," he said.

As far as he knows, this is the first center of its kind in Michigan. There are two things that make One Stop Shop unique: 1) the array of services, many for no fee, it offers to customers; 2) the fact anyone can use the center a different computer stations for re-

search 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays. "Many of these stations are still being developed," said Rich-ard Wiser, supervisor of Oakland County's information services

The Information Kloak or Land
Information System, for example,
is still getting information for its
computer files. This system helps
assers understand and apply natural
resource and land use information ranging from demographized maps can be created using
the geographic information system, or GIS. It's also a way to
learn about the Oakland County
Planning and Economic Development staff or the Oakland County
Board of Commissioners.
Another public resource is the
Oakland County Landfile computer base. It has information on
every county parcel. It's handy for
getting information on a property's owner, address, sidwell number, legal description, assars a'd
value, achool district, neighborhood and use code. group.

The Information Klosk or Land



Business tweet: Joe Vander Meulen (right), Land Information Access Association executive director, shows visitors Margaret Crawly (left) and Pat Burns some of the touch-screen information services at the Information Kiosk. His East Lansing company developed the software for the Information Kiosk.

Surf the Internet with new guide to databases



n area research company is in the fore-front of trying to catalog in a meaningful and functional way the vast resources of the Inthe vast re-sources of the In-

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Cole Research, located in Determination of the Cole Research, located in Research, located and cole Robby products.

Entirer this year, the "Gale Coulde to Internet Databases" was released and is now available in an easy-to-use print edition with a master index that cites more than 8,000 references to data bases (2,000), organizations, hosta, and publications. A subject index lists almost 1,300 specific subject terms and points users to entries in a descriptive listing. A problem with any print direction of the Cole Research of the Cole

tory of the Internet is that some of the listings may become outdated, or new listings missed, before the book reaches the printer. But anyone who attempts to catalog the Internet fully realizes this. Gale deals with this with an on-line slee to keep current information before users. Although you will never find a current listing in print form, Gale comes as close as anyone else who has tackled this likely impossible challenge.

The challenge is well expressed by this quote from the Center for Electronic Texts in the Hunanties: "The Internet is like using a library where the shelves keep moving, there is no catalog, and an extra truckload of books is dumped in the entrance hall every hour." Anyone who has spent time on the Internet knows this to be true.

time on the Internet knows this to be true.

In non-technical language, the Gale Guide gives information on how to access major government, cademic, research, educational and pop culture data bases via multiple access paths including Gopher, Telnet, FTP, E-mail and universal resource locator (URL) addresses for Web sites.

Each descriptive listing in the guide contains a description of the data base and details on how to access it vie the Internet. An entry may contain as many as 24 items, such as retrieval and download information, search routines, geographic and time span coverage, related mailing lists, update frequency, fees, and other information.

For instance, a listing that caught my eye was "Historical Costuming." This site can be accessed by Gopher with the address gopher//life-inforice.edu/ 11/subject/tertiles/hist.cost.

The site is described as covering a wide range of historical authenticity, with patterns that require a wide range of historical authenticity, with patterns that require a wide range of textile skills. Main files in this data base include: About Historical Costuming. Good Sources of Costuming Information; Period Pabric Sources; Seminole War Re-enactments and Frontier Costuming, and more.

The host is listed as Rice Uni-

and more.

The host is listed as Rice University and a contat person is

Shelly Johnson; E-mail shel@rice.du.

Another interesting listing was the Whole Frog Project, which provides high school biology classes the ability to explore the anatomy of a frog by using data from high-resolution MRI imaging and from mechanical sectioning along with 3D surface and volume rendering software to visualize the anatomical structures of the intact animal. The host is Lawrence Berkeley Laborratory in Berkeley. Callf, and the URL is http://george.libl.gov or by anonymous FTP at george.blkg.wo with the directory being pub/Whole Frog.

The guide also has a Host/Provider index with names of organizations that maintain or provide data for the data bases — bibliographic, image, numeric, software, is a list of names and E-mail addresses of people to centact for more information on individual data bases.

There also is an Alternative Formata Index that tells users the names of Internet data bases that the state of the tell of the commence of the data bases and the commence of the comme

answer to a question posted there by Yucatan Tom. Users who come up with the right answer will get entered into a drawing for a free guide. Cheryl says there will be a new question, and a new chance to win, every two weeks. The direct URL to the Gale Guide page is http://www.thomson.com/galenetgde.html.

If you don't want to enter the contest, but want a copy of the Gale Guide to Internet Databases, call 1-800-877-GALE (4253). Gale Research, by the way, is part of the International Thomson Publishing company, which is quite big in England and has subsidiaries throughout the U.S. That explains the appearance of "thomson" in the Gale URL cited above.

You can direct questions to Emory Daniels by E-mail of emory@oconline.com. To sign up for O&E On-Line, dial (313)991-0903, at "log-in" prompt type GL6NY2. Past columns may be accessed on-line at http://econline.com/(tilde mark)emoryd/archive.html.

Acceptance letters, tailored resume covers are helpful



Q I was recently offered a position
with a small
company in another city.
When I asked
to get the offer
in writing, the
hiring manager
seemed offended. What's
going on?

May organizations don't generate offer letters for jobs at every level. Others operate on hendshakes and verbal commitments alone. To the manager, your request might have suggested a lack of trust. If the company is uncomfortable with the idea of an offer letter, consider writing a detailed acceptance letter. Outline your job responsibilities and the terms of compensation as you

understand them. Ask for clarifi-cation and correction if you've got it wrong. Be sure to avoid using legalistic language (employers are sensitive about potential law-suits). Your letter could serve as a handy reference in the months to come. By all means, make very effort to eliminate ambiguity be-fore relocating!

fore relocating!

Firms that don't put offers in Firm that don't put offers in writing miss an opportunity to un-deracore expectations and spell out important policies, such as drug testing and at-will termination. Offer letters also help put new employees at case by signaling a willingness to communicate openly and definitively. Still, it's all a matter of what a company used to doing. The fear of putting anything in writing is becoming common.

Should I write a new, tailor-made cover letter

for every resume I send out, or is a form letter acceptable?

I receive hundreds of resumes every month and rarely read their accompanying over letters. Why? They all sound the same and almost never provide any new information beyond the resume. Still, most employers expect cover letters and they really can be useful if done correctly. Don't create a new letter from scratch every time, but don't send a form letter either. Write an introductory paragraph that is send a form letter either. Write an introductory paragraph that is relatively standard. Then, create a middle paragraph that specifically shows how your skills fit the apecial requirements of the job. This part will change with each new opportunity and can help make your letter stand out. Closs with a standard paragraph. Above

all, keep it short and focus on the job.

Some people send cover letters about the size of this newspaper and offer up all sorts of information that is simply irrelevant. One fillow detailed his philosophy of life in six pages. A lady gave a blow-by-blow account of the events surrounding her disorce. I like the ones that stort out "Good morning" We open mall in the oftenion.

I've sont out over 25.

Q I've sont out over 25 resumes in the last six months and haven't had a nib-ble! My skills and work history are very goed. Why can't I get interviews?

A Send more resumes — lots more. Being too selective when responding to ads or in target mailings is a common problem. Some candidates declare

or quantry, not quanty.

Q I scent to be at an impasse
With a potential employer.
The company won't make me
an offer unless I tell them exactly what salary I want. If I
tell them, don't I risk getting
less than they might have been
willing to pay?

Maybe. Some organizations are bound by a highly defined salary structure or union wags scale in making offers. Others have tremendous latitude in coming up with starting figures.

Send questions to George Hoyes, Job Search, P.O. Box 2497. Southfield, MI 48037. He is president of Emplec Corp., a recruiting outplacement and testing firm in Southfield, and vice president of Proxy Employment Service, also in Southfield. Job Search runs the first and third Thursdays of each month.

BUSINESS MARKETPLACE

Marketplace features a glimpse of Oakland County business news and notes, including corporate name changes, new products, new store or office openings, new affiliations, new positigas, mergers, acquisitions and new ways of doing business. White Business Marketplace, Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. Our fax number is (810) 644-1314. Marketplace features a glimpse

EXEM BISINESS

G & G Data Systems has opened a showroom at 870 Bauer, Birmingham. President Brian Gautner, as Birmingham resident, said the full-service computer store sells IBM-compatible hordware and software. G & G dless services computers.

The store leases Knisk "sight and sound" computer quipment for special business promotions. Shappers can also access the In-

ternet via G & G's in-store computer.
The store's phone number is
(810) 647-2897.

E CRUISE ON

The grand opening of GalaxSea
Cruises at 134 W. Maple Road,
Troy, is 6-7 pm. Thursday, Sept.
21. The new agency's president is
Tom Dey. The phone number is
(810) 382-2080.

IN ON THE MOVE

Access Insurance Services, Comerica Bank's insurance sub-sidiary, has relocated to 6070 W. Maple in West Bloomfield and ome Comerica Insurance

Services.
The firm formerly was located at 36600 Grand River in Farming-

ton.
The name change allows us the company to benefit from favorable recognition of the Comorica name, said Andrea Martin, president of

the insurance corporation.
"Cornerica was one of the first banks in Michigan to purchase an insurance agency, with the acquisition of Access Insurance Bervices last year," she sidded.
Insurance products include annuities and life, disability and

E LEADERSHIP SEMENAR

as ARDERGMIP SABERAR
Barbara Lech of Bloomfield
Hills, a student at Walsh College
in Troy, attended Operation Exterprise, the young adult division
of American Management Association in Hamilton, N.Y. Leach
was sponsored by the college.

IS SETTEMENTALLY SIGNALLY
The Women's Economic Club
annual membership recopition is
5:50-8 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 10, at
the Michigan Design Center in
Troy, Members and guesta will
cocialize and tour the design cen
ter. The fee is \$20 for a member.

and guest, or \$25 for those attending alone.
For information, call (313) 963-5088.

EM SUSTRESS RETWORK

The Business Network Somerset Chapter will meet at 7 a.m.
Wednasday, Sept. 20, at 3001 W.
Big Beaver, Tryp; (Use the building's east entrancy. The network's goal to exchange qualified business referrels with members and guests.

For reservations, call Christine
Bellsario, (810) 837-5729, or Jerry
Dywasick, (810) 850-8830, ext.

3160. EI BUSINESS NETWORK

El COMPUTER DONATION
Southfield-based Callular One
has donated 110 terminals and
personal computers to the Detroit
Public Schools' Global Communications Project. The two-part
project allows students around
the world to communicate and

learn about cultures via the Inter-

net.

In the project's first phase, Detroit school children established a pen pal network on the Internet. The project's second part aims to present hands-on math and science lessons to middle school students.

dents.

Earlier this year, students submitted their ideas for world peace to NATO via the Internet.

EL THINK RETIREMENT

85 THINE RETIREMENT
Retirement expert Gall Eisen
will address the GM Mem's Club
and the Society for Lifetime Fluid
ning on Saturday, Sept. 23, at
Somerset Inn, Troy. The first 109
eople to register will receive a
free subscription to New Choices.
The event follows a golf outing
Thursday, Sept. 21, at Bogie Lake
Golf Club in White Lake Township. The coet is \$30.
To sign up for either event, call
Suzzane, (810) 982-1744.

M PASSE BUZZWORDS

HIP PARSE BUZZWORDS

HIP words come and go, especially those coined in the corporate world, according to Western Staff Services, a temporary staffing agency in Rochester Hills.

Western Staff recently polled

500 business executives nation-wide to learn what buss words are

wide to team what buss words are in and what's out. Sixty-nine percent of the respondents said "politically cor-rect" is an over-used phraso of the nineties. One executive said "it's just another word used by whiten"

just another word used by whiners."

Other words on the way out include information highway, information age and cyberspace. One of five respondents asid state of the art, win win and corporate culture also are history.

Find up by the survey, several executives offered their own black-listed words no brainer, putting out fires, in the loop, open door, world class, maximiss.