

Chuck Muer goes fishing for industry

By Tim Richard
staff writer

"We've not had to go out and hustle industry," said Charles A. Muer, "because the automobile industry was such a strong economic base."

That's changing, said the restaurateur who is also president of the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce.

Muer last week announced that the Greater Detroit/Southeast Michigan Economic Development Council will ask businesses to donate \$1.4 million to a three-year program to target industries and companies which might invest here and bring jobs.

The Economic Development Council is the joint effort of the chamber, Detroit Edison Co., the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments and the Michigan Office of Economic Expansion.

With two million persons in the work force and 233,000 unemployed at a jobless rate of more than 13 percent, he said, it will take hundreds of thousands of new jobs to cut the unemployment rate to a more acceptable 4 percent by 1990.

The fund-raising effort Muer announced will seek donations from "those who have nowhere else to go" — utilities, financial institutions, hotels, restaurants, newspapers, broadcasters — in short, firms essentially locked into southeast Michigan.

With only \$450,000 to \$500,000 a year, the Economic Development Council will have only a small staff of five headed by Arthur W. Saltzman of Birmingham, former Ford Motor Co. industrial relations man and business consultant.

Chunks of the money will go into advertising, publications and travel, said Saltzman.



Charles A. Muer

• EDC and Edison will provide staff services for those firms' location efforts. Good prospects will be turned over to local economic development corporations, such as the ones in Oakland and suburban Wayne counties, for actual plant location work.

Local EDCs, said Muer, have limited geographic interests, and many are essentially industrial bonding agencies. The chamber/SEMCOG/Edison/State EDC will act as their marketing arm.

AGREEING that Michigan has a national reputation as a high-wage, anti-business state, Muer said chamber officials have been working in that area, too, mapping out a political agenda with Gov. William G. Milliken and the "quadrant" of legislative leaders.

"They agree they've got to get going on a program," said Muer, declining to reveal what changes would be sought in state laws. "Michigan is now pro-business, and it's changing."

The chamber has also met with United Auto Workers leaders, asking the union giant to use some consideration with firms coming into the region. The heavy manufacturing wage rates in Detroit are 50 percent higher than the national average, Muer said, and government workers here are also among the best paid in the nation.

Muer said chamber leaders have to decide whether to hustle 1) high wage, high technology industries or 2) "those with lots of jobs at lower wages." Muer said there is reason to think the industries with lower wage rates might possibly be interested, although conventional wisdom would point toward the former group.

Women poets read work at OCC

A 10 a.m. coffee reception Thursday will begin a free Oakland Community College poetry program entitled "Women's Work."

The event will be in the Orchard Ridge campus's room J-409.

The program includes Patricia Hooper and Melba Boyd at 10:30 a.m. Ms. Hooper's work has appeared in Poetry, Ohio Review, The American Scholar and New Directions. Ms. Boyd's work has appeared in Broadside Series, Obolita, Bird World and Obsidian. She's also written a book entitled "Cat Eyes and Deadwood."

Linda Nemec Foster, a finalist for the Anne Sexton Prize, and Arlene Biggs, 1978 Margaret Bridgman Award winner, are scheduled for 11:20 a.m. Ms. Foster's work has appeared in Tenthredin, Moving Out and Chowder Review.

HERE'S HOW the EDC effort will be made, Muer said:

- Economic research will help the EDC identify industries which might be good prospects for southeast Michigan. Expanding companies within those industries will be targeted. Two leading contenders: Plastics, robotics.
- Those firms' chief executive officers will be visited by CEOs from southeast Michigan firms on a one-to-one basis. Visiting CEOs will be armed with information packets.

End-smoking, weight-loss clinics set in Southfield

The Michigan Public Health Association will offer stop-smoking and weight-loss clinics through hypnosis Tuesday in the Sheraton-Southfield Hotel.

The clinics will also be open to the public.

Ken Klegon, MPHA executive director, said requests from the organization's members were the reason for including the health clinics at the state meeting.

"We're using Barry Beder because of the great success he's had working with the American Lung Association," Klegon said.

Beder's first stop smoking program for the American Lung Association of Southeastern Michigan, "The Great New Year's Cigarette Send-Off," was attended by more than 700 persons and resulted in a carefully measured 45 percent success rate after one year, according to American Lung Association officials.

"Beder's 45 percent success rate is almost double the national average success rate of 25 percent for stop-smoking programs, so we're looking forward to a successful and well-attended program," Klegon said.

Beder currently conducts stop smoking and weight loss clinics for the American Lung Association of Michigan throughout the upper and lower peninsula, for Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Michigan Bell and other local and national organizations. He also teaches stress management programs for the Society of Manufacturing Engineers.

The MPHA clinics will be held Tuesday, May 19, at the Sheraton-Southfield, and will offer a price reduction from Beder's regularly-scheduled public clinics.

The stop smoking clinic will begin at 6 p.m. and will cost \$35, a \$10 price reduction, for all participants. The weight loss clinic will begin at 7:30 p.m. and cost \$20, a \$5 reduction. All participants will receive free hypnosis cassette tapes to use at home after the clinic.

Artists help retarded kids

Trainable mentally impaired students at the Oakland Training Institute in Lamphere are working hand in hand with several artists-in-residence under a \$5,000 grant from the Michigan Council for the Arts.

The program is designed to promote a sense of accomplishment and encourage self-esteem.

Participating artists are William King, a dancer; Robert Abate, a musician; Elaine Dixon, a ceramic maker.

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