

Shot into history

Sixteen times a day, muskets and a cannon are fired in demonstrations at Fort Michilimackinac State Park, Mackinac Island, from mid-June through Labor Day. Operated by the Mackinac Island State Park Commis-

sion, these "living history" presentations show vacationers how French, British and early American soldiers and civilians lived in the late 18th century.

Business index edges up again

For the second month in a row, the Michigan Business Activity Index (MBAI), a measure of economic activity, rose two points, reaching a level of 133 in May, according to Manufacturers National Bank of Detroit.

The index now stands 3.9 percent above the level of one year ago, and for the first five months of the year it is 4.2 percent ahead.

"Most of the increase came from greater steel production and higher car sales," said David L. Littmann, vice-president and senior economist of the bank.

He noted that auto sales continued to benefit from the industry's financing-incentive programs. But Littmann added that the overall index would have risen more impressively in May had it not been for slippage in motor vehicle production, as well as some of the employment series.

State joblessness, work force dip

Michigan's seasonally adjusted jobless rate for June fell by nearly half a percentage point.

The reason: Summer jobseekers who were unsuccessful in finding work began leaving the labor force, according to Richard Simmons Jr., director of the Michigan Employment Security Commission.

Simmons said that the state's June seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell to 9.4 percent from 9.8 percent in May.

During the month, the number of jobless workers across the state dropped by 22,000 to 406,000. Last year, Michigan's June unemployment rate was 10.3 percent with 411,000 out of work.

"Apparently, the number of jobseekers entering the state's work force in search of summer employment peaked in May as our labor force grew by 31,000," Simmons explained.

"Since many of these jobseekers were unsuccessful, they stopped looking and began leaving the labor force in June. As a result, the state's

unemployment rate dropped." In June, Michigan's labor force declined by 25,000 to 4,335,000, Simmons said.

Tech networks invite business

Mid-sized and small business can gain easy access to the research and development power of five state universities that have joined to form the Technology Transfer Network.

Created in October with funding from the state Department of Commerce and five universities, the network provides sources of technical and business assistance to companies with limited research and development assets.

"The network puts business representatives in contact with faculty members," said Alta Kan, director of the University of Michigan Technology Transfer Center, located in the Special Projects Division of the Institute of Science and Technology.

"The program also pays for a short consultation, up to about one day. Any further service can be negotiated between the business and the faculty member."

The Technology Transfer Centers are linked by computer, enabling the centers to make quick, coordinated responses to business requests. Businesses pay no fee for the initial contact and referral service of each center, or for much of the additional information and assistance.

SERVICES provided by the network include:

- Identification of resources needed to solve business problems.
- Direct assistance and technical problem-solving by faculty and researchers.
- Testing or research using university equipment or facilities.
- Joint research projects between businesses and universities.
- Evaluation of new or existing products, processes or technology.
- Access to technical literature,

data bases and research findings.

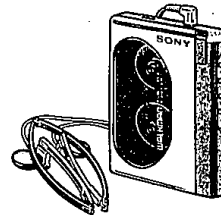
• Referrals to state and local economic development agencies.

KAN SAID that since the U-M center opened, 39 to 45 businesses have sought assistance in such areas as ergonomics, marketing, waste treatment, materials testing, production scheduling, genetic research, chemical testing and holography.

"It's too early to have a major success story to tell, although we have already provided a great deal of assistance," Kan said.

Other centers, besides U-M's and Michigan State's are at Wayne State, Western Michigan and Michigan Technological universities and at the Michigan Department of Commerce, Lansing.

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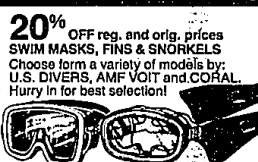


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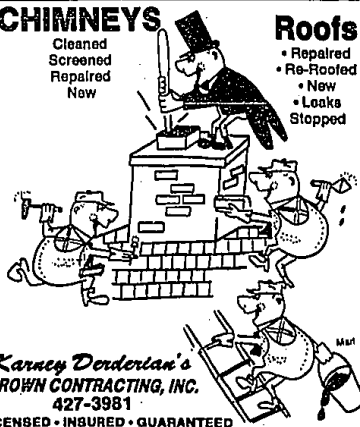
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