

Sometimes an auto factory can be too sanitary

Particles of graphite hang in the air like some fine silver rain inside this building housing a casting line that converts liquid steel into rolled sheets, stacked a half a hundred yards high, reminding you of the paper towel inventory of some nameless race of monsters.

The graphite is more or less harmless, unlike the abrasive dust shaken from a foundry mold, but it leaves a greasy smear, although that is not as bad as the stench of a grease pit or the grime that collects in cutting and retaining tanks on a machining line.

Sometimes it seems there are a thousand or more ways to get dirty making cars. There are greases, oils, paints, solvents, glues, acids, glycols,

metal chips, carbon deposits, rust streaks and a characteristic burn caused by hot slag flying off the face of a forging, something like a flaming metal corollary.

Liquids are sprayed, dipped, recovered, held in tanks and dripped on the floor. Ultimately the leftovers make an incredible mess, which if you are lucky is worth something to somebody to gather up and cart away. There are a hundred or more characteristic kinds of grime ranging from coal dust to white limestone to the grit of taconite powder.

It is a marvel of modern technology that most of this stuff can be handled in rooms occupied by a thousand people, and the most notable intrusion is a characteristic smell that



auto talk Dan McCosh

can be ignored after 20 minutes or so. Precipitators, filters, settling ponds and scrubbers work quite well, and a modern foundry (they aren't all modern) can sometimes seem less messy than a bank. Of course, ultimately, somebody has to go in and clean the filters out, too.

PEOPLE WORK with this stuff, necessary to make cars, to make money. White collar becomes a tan-

gible line, defining the move to an inside job, where the air whirs with air conditioning and a mess is spilled out of the floor for the Xerox machine. But there still are a lot of jobs where it takes a half dozen years of seniority to simply to go home at night with your hands cleanable.

In Kokomo, Ind., a division of General Motors/Hughes Aircraft assembles microcircuits. It is an assem-

bly line for Lilliput gone mad, with the thickness of individual components measured in atoms. Viewed through the microscope, the scaly surface of a human hair arcs into the distance like the curvature of the earth, while on the horizon is a small village of integrated circuits.

The parts are assembled in a clean room, a factory the size of a medium-size K mart store suspended in space, isolated even from the walls and foundations of the larger building that surrounds it. Each conduit and pipe that enters the clean room is suspended on springs, to absorb the minute shock of a pump or a generator in the basement below.

The air is sucked into the room by a cluster of 62 fans, four of which

are large enough to support the roof of the Silverdome. The air is filtered to eliminate all but 10 particles per cubic foot, the largest a speck that makes dandruff seem like an asteroid. It is held at a constant 68 degrees, just like Mammoth Cave.

To work here, you don a white jumpsuit, head to foot, with a bib over your mouth and little static lines trailing from your booties. A sneeze is like an oil refinery fire, and it takes several weeks of indoctrination to learn the ground rules and what's important, if you can adapt to this alien workplace.

You can only recognize your co-workers by their eyes. Sometimes at night you dream of working with pigs.

P5 offers tax- deferred growth

Last week I explained a unique investment called AIT (annuity income with a twist), which is attractive to people in need of guaranteed, tax-favored current income.

In this column I will briefly explain another complex investment, which is attractive to those investors who prefer to receive guaranteed monthly income at a future date.

Tax Advantaged P5

Except for investments through insurance companies, returns on all non-qualified investments are currently taxable. So every year you are taxed on your CD interest, even though you don't even touch it.

However, if the same investment is made through an insurance company, interest, dividends and capital gains would accumulate tax-deferred.

The P5 investment is made through an insurance company. But it offers much more than a tax-deferred investment.

It also provides a five-year guaranteed interest rate of 9.1 percent, flexibility in distribution of the in-



finances and you Sid Mittra

come, and a host of valuable income withdrawal options.

However, unlike AIT discussed last week, P5 is suitable for you only if you need monthly income sometime in the future but don't quite know when you will need it. Here are the key features of P5:

- It offers a guaranteed interest rate of 9.1 percent for five years, after which interest will be declared on an annual basis. So, if you invest \$50,000 today, in five years your investment will equal \$78,742.

- Your investment principal plus interest is guaranteed. It cannot be influenced by market fluctuations.

- Your money will grow tax-deferred.

- If you leave your money in P5 even after five years it will continue

to grow tax-deferred. Assuming the interest rate of 9.1 percent, your investment will be worth \$119,459 in 10 years and \$184,647 in 15 years.

- You can start receiving a monthly income from P5 any time you want (even after just one year). As long as you take the income over five or more years, there are no penalties, surrender charges or loads.

- Some of the attractive income options include:

- 1) Lifetime income for you.

- 2) Lifetime income for you and your spouse.

- 3) Option II plus a minimum guaranteed income for 20 years if both spouses die prematurely.

- Not only your income from P5 grows tax-deferred, but a larger percentage (40-60 percent) of your in-

come from it will be tax-free when you start withdrawing the money.

As mentioned, P5 is a complex investment with unique features, and you should not rush into it without fully understanding the pros and cons of investing in it.

I will explain it more fully at the educational seminars, details of which follow.

Other topics to be discussed at the seminar: Lump sum distribution vs. forward averaging, Early vs. regular retirement.

Retirement Seminars 7-8:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 19, at the Kingsley Inn, 1475 N. Woodward, Bloomfield Hills, and 7-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 27, at the Holiday Inn of Farmington Hills, 38123 10 Mile, Farmington Hills.

Call 642-8888 for reservations for both seminars.

Sid Mittra is a professor of finance, school of business at Oakland University and owner of Coordinated Financial Planning.

marketplace

Flexible Plan Investments Ltd. moved its offices to 3883 Telegraph, Suite 100, Bloomfield Hills. The telephone number is 642-6640.

W.B. Doner and Co. captured four ANDY Silver Statues of Excellence at the annual ANDY Awards Competition.

Kennedy Machinery Co. of Anaheim, Calif., has been named the new dealer for Blow Press Limited of Birmingham in the California, Nevada and Arizona area.

Comerica Bank-Detroit has opened a "financial services super-market" that provides a wide variety of banking services to the Farmington community than a traditional bank branch. The banking center is at 35405 Grand River at Drake.

Smith-Winchester's program for Automotive News was selected a 1989 "Certificate of Excellence" winner in the 15th Annual B-PAA Pro-Comm Awards Competition.

Dr. Lawrence D. Duffield of Birmingham opened his dental practice

at 11338 S. Woodward, Royal Oak. Dr. Duffield offers a full range of dental services including restoratives such as fillings, crowns and dentures, gum treatments, extractions, oral surgery and cosmetic dentistry.

Omni Jobs opened in Rochester Hills to offer home maintenance and repair services.

Erhard BMW of Birmingham held its grand opening May 30. The dealership is at 4065 Maple, Birmingham. The telephone number is 642-6565.

The Public Image, a public relations/fund-raising agency in operation since August, 1987, was named agency of record for Independence For Life, a program sponsored by Michigan National Bank which provides passenger vans for senior citizens and Forgotten Harvest.

The Birmingham Pearl Vision Center is participating in a national fund-raising campaign to benefit the Pearl Vision Foundation, a non-profit organization established by Pearl Inc.

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