

# Quick-kill artist takes on mercantilists — and fails

T. Boone Pickens isn't your average car guy. The corporate greenmail artist made his billions in the takeover mania of the 1980s by being so obnoxious nearly every corporation in America was willing to pay nearly anything to get rid of him after he became a major shareholder — setting a pattern that Ross Perot eventually raised to an art form with General Motors.

Mainly, Pickens concentrated on airlines, which is one reason why you can't find your baggage at Metropolitan airport these days. But for the past two or three years, he has tackled the ultimate challenge for a junk-bond wheeler-dealer — plying his trade in Japan.

PICKENS MANAGED to buy up 26.4 percent of Koto Manufacturing Co., and demanded a seat on Koto's board of directors, whereupon Koto's board of directors responded with a familiar international hand gesture that is recognizable in Brooklyn. It was the corporate greenmail artists' worst nightmare — they simply ignored him.

At this point, Pickens noticed he was confronting something entirely different — a U.S.-style junk bond artist — the Japanese may be inscrutable, but they're not stupid.

After two years, Pickens appears ready to throw in the towel in Japan, but now he is calling for a (U.S.) con-



auto talk  
**Dan McCosh**

gressional investigation of the Japanese keiretsu.

KEIRETSU is a sort of pragmatic conglomerate characteristic of Japanese business arrangements. It has its roots in loyalty conceded Japanese warlords, which later was translated to a close-knit relationship between Japanese industry and

banks. Once in a while, the keiretsu get a little carried away, such as the time they took over the Japanese Diet and started World War II.

Pickens' mistake was buying in to a company that was partially owned by Toyota and expecting it to put the squeeze on its major customer to enhance its profits, which would have benefited Pickens, but not necessarily

ly the long-range relationship with Toyota.

KEIRETSU IS, in fact, a philosophy both at odds with much current U.S. management philosophy and in some ways illegal in the U.S. anti-trust scheme of things. It also is an extremely pragmatic relationship that has resulted in the ability to orchestrate a deceptively loose-knit conglomerate into an amazingly efficient manufacturing enterprise.

The Keiretsu are classic mercantilists, operating with the goal of manufacturing as much as possible, buying as little as possible from outsiders, and concentrating their capital resources in production.

PICKENS HIMSELF represents

the opposite pole, being a believer in paper liquidity and the dominance of highly mobile capital — the quick killing and the cornered market — as the way to create wealth.

It seems a bit much to portray Pickens' troubles as a battle between good and evil. But it's rare that such a classic confrontation between two basic economic philosophies becomes such a test of wills.

Clearly, he has zeroed in on one of the critical issues that will affect how the car business will be run in the next century.

For that reason alone, he is worth listening to.

Dan McCosh is automotive editor of Popular Science magazine.

## datebook

### DIRECT MARKETERS

Thursday, May 2 — Direct Marketing Association of Detroit meets. Information: 258-8803.

### NETWORKING

Thursday, May 2 — Leads Club meets in Southfield. Information: Jo Anne Kusudo, 641-2756.

### GRAND OPENING

Monday, May 6 — Grand opening of Kids at Work, a Discovery Learning Center, at 4400 Prudential Town Center, Southfield. Full-day childcare center. Information: 827-9880.

### PRODUCTIVITY EXPO

Monday-Thursday, May 6-9 — Detroit '91 Advanced Productivity Exposition in Detroit. Information: Robert Kian, 271-0777. Sponsor: Society of Manufacturing Engineers.

### BIRMINGHAM CHAMBER

Tuesday, May 7 — Birmingham-Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce meets 5:30 p.m. in Birmingham. Fee: \$10. Information: 644-1700.

### COMMERCIAL INVESTORS

Tuesday, May 7 — Commercial Investment Division meets in Southfield. Information: 585-1253.

### MANUFACTURING

Training Thursday, May 7-9 — Manufacturing training courses in Detroit. Information: 271-1500, Ext.

369. Sponsor: Society of Manufacturing Engineers.

### HOUSES AND CONDOS

Wednesday, May 8 — "Real Estate: Homes and Condominiums" in Southfield. Fee: \$8. Information: 746-8700. Sponsor: Southfield Public Schools.

### INDIVIDUAL INVESTORY

Wednesday, May 8 — American Association of Individual Investors meets in Troy. Information: 851-1833.

### ADVISORY SERVICES

Wednesday, May 8 — Business Advisory Services conference 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in Troy. Fee: \$10. Information: 855-2288. Sponsor: Michigan Association of Certified Public Accountants.

### EQUIPMENT LEASING

Wednesday, May 8 — Women in Equipment Leasing meets in Birmingham. Information: Carol Siep, 464-8100.

### NETWORKING

Thursday, May 9 — Leads Club meets in Southfield. Information: Jo Anne Kusudo, 641-2756.

### WORK WITH ARCHITECT

Thursday, May 9 — "How to Hire and Work with an Architect" in Southfield. Fee: \$8. Information:

746-8700. Sponsor: Southfield Public Schools.

### CAREER WOMEN

Thursday, May 9 — National Association of Career Women meets in Farmington Hills. Information: 626-0752.

### INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Thursday, May 9 — "Immigration Issues and You" 7-9 p.m. in Southfield. Information: 569-5320. Sponsor: Stanley H. Kaplan Education Center Ltd., American Immigration Lawyers Association.

### BUILDING OWNERS

Thursday, May 9 — Building Owners and Managers Association meets in Southfield. Information: 964-4000.

### WORDPERFECT 5.0

Thursdays, May 9-30 — "WordPerfect 5.0 Intermediate on the IBM Personal Computer" 7-9 p.m. in Bloomfield Hills. Fee: \$85. Information: 645-3635. Sponsor: Cranbrook Schools.

### CMA REVIEW

Saturday, May 11 — Certified Management Accountant examination review Part Three 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. near Rochester. Fee: \$95. Information: 370-3129. Sponsor: Oakland University.

## marketplace

Tuxedos To You in Birmingham will visit a location, size tuxedos, then deliver them. The telephone number is 647-4452.

The Overbeke Co. in West Bloomfield has been named the advertising and public relations agency for Sony MagneScale America Inc.

The food brokerage firm of Conrad Patterson and Associates Inc. of Grand Rapids and Southfield received Michigan Sugar Co.'s "Broker Of The Year" award for 1989-1990 sales.

William Neseth of Conrad Patterson's Southfield office received the "Brokerage Salesperson Of The Year" award.

Oakland County recently awarded a contract to Stone, August, Baker Public Relations to provide opinion research and a public education/information program in support of the county's solid waste management system.

Lawyers Title Insurance Corp. moved its Troy branch, national division and state headquarters to Wilshire Plaza West, 1050 Wilshire Drive, Troy. The phone number is 649-3322.

Dennis R. Green & Associates was named McLaughlin's Home Furnishings' Designer of Southgate as its advertising/public relations agency.

Built in Vacuum Center of Troy was honored as Beam's Built-In Vacuum's "Most Improved Dealer in 1990." The company also was named one of Beam's "Top 20 Dealers for 1990."

Gray & Kilgore Inc. was retained by Computware Corp., a leading worldwide supplier of IBM systems software tools and professional services, as its advertising agency.

American Speedy Printing Center Inc. bought its Bloomfield Center, 1936 Telegraph in the Bloomfield Design Plaza.

Dennis R. Green & Associates was named ASA Cabinet Corp. of Walled Lake as its advertising/public relations agency.

MARS Advertising in Southfield has been named agency-of-record for Childtime Children's Centers.

Hirsch & Co. Inc. in Birmingham was appointed by Associated Exhibitors Inc., West Bloomfield.

Jeffery Ibbia and Associates moved to 251 Merrill, Birmingham. The telephone number is 647-8590.

O.K. Harris Works of Art Gallery has announced the expansion of the gallery with the opening of an upstairs Annex.

L.W.B. Doner and Co. in Southfield was the top winner at the 20th annual Mobius Awards, earning 18 first place awards in a variety of media, and "Radio Best of Festival" for a commercial for the Washington District Ford Dealers Association.

Quecú Salon in Birmingham is open at the Plaza, 210 S. Woodward. The telephone number is 642-1848.

Howard & Howard moved to the Pinehurst Office Center, Suite 250, 1400 North Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills.



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*The Barclay Inn*

145 S. Huron Blvd., Birmingham 646-7330

*THE BERKSHIRE HOTEL*

26111 Telegraph Rd., Southfield 356-4333

## business people

Aurel Bumba and Tim Morris, associates, and broker/owner Steve Cole of Re/Max Executive Inc. were each awarded membership in the 1990 RE/MAX 100 Percent Club.

Broker/owner Joseph Durso of Re/Max West Inc. was awarded membership in the 1990 RE/MAX 100 Percent Club.

Associate-brokers Randall Russell and Rachel Rino of Re/Max 100 Inc. were awarded membership in the 1990 RE/MAX 100 Percent Club.

Marianne VanWulven of Southfield was appointed vice president at Michigan National Bank.

Dr. Andrew Halperin, an obstetrician/gynecologist, joined the staff at Henry Ford Medical Centers in West Bloomfield and Royal Oak. Dr. Henry Cramer, an ear, nose and throat specialist, joined the division of otology and neurology at Henry Ford Hospital and will treat patients at Henry Ford Medical Center, West Bloomfield.

Julia Graves was named therapeutic activities supervisor with Southfield Rehabilitation Hospital.

David Yaldo of Southfield has become a principal member of Schier, Deneweth & Parfitt of Troy.

Kenneth Modell of Franklin, senior vice president with the Southfield office of Shearson Lehman Brothers, was named to The American Funds Group All-American Team.

Joe Giordano of Rochester Hills, president with the Rochester Hills office of Joseph James Financial Services Inc., was named to The American Funds Group All-American Team.

Russell Ellison of West Bloomfield was appointed director of division manufacturing engineering at General Dynamics Land Systems Division.

American Speedy Printing Centers Inc. in Bloomfield Hills named William McIntyre, Jr. president and chief operating officer.

Dr. Sonia Ramirez of Rochester Hills was elected secretary of the Medical Staff at Holy Cross Hospital in Detroit for 1991. She is a member of the American and Michigan Societies of Internal Medicine and the Michigan and Wayne County Medical Societies.

Dr. Rajendra Bothra of West Bloomfield was elected president of the Medical Staff at Holy Cross Hospital in Detroit for 1991. He is a certified general surgeon specializing in laser surgery.

Dr. Ved Singla of Troy was elected treasurer of the Medical Staff at Holy Cross Hospital in Detroit for 1991. He is a board certified in gastroenterology and internal medicine.

Kmart Corp. of Troy announced the appointment of Donald Beaumont to president and chief executive officer of Kmart Canada Limited.

Dr. Warren Brandes of West Bloomfield was named chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology, Otolaryngology and Maxillo-Facial Plastic Surgery at Botsford General Hospital, Farmington Hills.

James E. Kostrava of Troy was named executive director of the President's Club at Oakland University, Rochester.

The American Funds Group All-American Team named Robert Finnigan, certified Financial Planner with the Birmingham office of Roney & Co.

Donna L. Reuschle of Bloomfield Hills has joined McCann SAS of Troy as the account supervisor for the GMC Truck light and medium duty commercial accounts.

Bill Abele and Rick Becker were elected senior vice presidents and Bill Behr, Len Bokaniewicz and Jim Brown were elected vice presidents by the board of directors at Ross Roy Inc. in Bloomfield Hills.

Kent Darragh of Birmingham was appointed vice president of operations at Cadillac Plastic and Chemical Co. in Troy.

Alan Schwartz, former head of the Michigan Attorney Grievance Commission from 1979 to 1988 will join the law firm of Fieger & Fieger of Southfield as a shareholder. The firm will now be known as Fieger, Fieger & Schwartz.

Hedley J. Williams of Rochester was promoted to executive vice president of Farbmam/Stein and Company in Troy.

Priscilla Terry, office manager at Cook Maida in Farmington Hills has earned membership in the Mazda Office Managers' Guild for 1990.

Edna Harris, office manager at Fischer Maida in Troy has earned membership in the Mazda Office Managers' Guild for 1990.

Beverly Johnson of Farmington Hills was named Consumers Power Company's director of telecommunications and network services.

BBDO-Detroit, a division of the BBDO Worldwide Network, has promoted Denise A. Robinson of West Bloomfield to senior vice president. She will be responsible for supervising account operations for the Dealer Association Advertising of the Chrysler Corporation's Dodge Division.

James Siefert, D.O. of West Bloomfield was named chairman of Botsford General Hospital's Department of Urology.

Southfield-based Yaffe & Co., one of the state's leading advertising agencies, has named Kathi Presutti, an award-winning advertising executive, its new creative director.

Judy D. Papler of Northville was appointed an account representative for Metropolitan Life Insurance Company's Livonia branch located in Southfield.

AT&T General Business Systems, a small business customer support organization, announced its Achievers' Club Award winners. Christian Gross of Southfield, a 1990 winner is an AT&T account executive who caters to customers needing business telecommunications systems requiring 20-80 phones.

# Sofas that last at prices that won't.

## Norwalk sofas last. But our sale prices end May 6th

Sofa shown sale priced starting at \$699

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Registration fee is \$20 per attendee, and first come basis until May 8.

**To Register by Phone:**  
**(312) 765-4855 or (313) 226-8654**