

# Sometimes, you've got to know when to fold 'em

There are no push-button phones in Meldrum Bay, Ontario, and Lloyd Webster, who retired from professional motorcycle racing to run the general store, sell fishing licenses and operate the local Coast Guard search and rescue boat, has to make a hundred-mile round trip to buy bread for the store.

This tends to make for the kind of vacation where you come back and get surprised by news, which for me included reading about the death of Soichiro Honda, and the demise of the Sterling and Peugeot cars in the U.S. market.

At the age of 84, Mr. Honda was a walking affront to the granola and low-stress lifestyle. Hard-working and hard-living, he once hit the head of Honda Research and Development over the head with a bolt he was displeased with.

rise of the Japanese auto industry, but it's not clear today whether Honda's present success was the result of his leadership or the fact that he stepped down long before the company began to gain any respect in the U.S. marketplace.

No matter, Mr. Honda was the kind of belligerent outsider most Americans could identify with, and somehow he managed to maintain the image of an underdog car company even when Honda began to out-sell General Motors.

It was Honda also that led the way in elbowing aside the old-line European manufacturers in the U.S. market. Honda has doggedly pursued the likes of Volkswagen for decades, but the huge surplus of models currently on sale in the United States squeezed the British, French and Italian industries even harder.

SO IT WAS no great surprise when Sterling Motors threw in the towel.



auto talk  
**Dan McCosh**

As a surviving fragment of the British industry that once produced the likes of Triumphs and Jaguars, Sterling was selling a DR-assembled version of the Acura Legend, which put them in the unenviable position of trying to sell a car with Japanese looks and British assembly quality, sort of like trying to make a movie idol out of Woody Allen's body and Stallone's brains.

Most missed will be the class the British brought to the auto show circuits, where they served tea and their models wore hats.

way) will be Peugeot, which was the last genuine oddball import on sale in the United States. A vestige of the 1960s, when every import was weird by definition, Peugeot began in the United States by selling diesel-powered French taxicabs with huge, white steering wheels, so bizarre that they made a three-cylinder two-stroke Saab look as stodgy as a funeral limo.

LATER, THE long-winded effort to sell Peugeots as ersatz luxury cars in the face of a beleaguered U.S. industry, the anxious Germans

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and the aggressive Japanese proved too much, and they folded their U.S. operation after 35 years on these shores.

It's clear that what's happening is the salad days are about over for using the United States as an endless source of wealth for anybody with something on four wheels and an urge to get into the auto business. Peugeot is withdrawing to Europe, which promises both growth that will outstrip the United States in the coming decades, and relentless com-

petition from the Japanese if the new European economic order ever lets them in. I predict that, like Fiat, they will prosper on their home turf.

IN ANY case, I figure Lloyd saw the handwriting on the wall earlier than most of us.

Lloyd moved to Meldrum Bay after selling off a collection of 36 motorcycles, a legacy of 20 years selling Triumphs and other brands, mainly British, in his store near Toronto, before he hung it up and headed north. That also ended 17 years of professional racing with the Triumph motocross team, in Europe and North America, in the years when British bikes still dominated the sport.

"A buddy of mine is still in the business, but he only sold about 50 bikes last year, and he used to sell 500," he told me as we drove through the woods in his pickup to get the bread, 50 miles away.

## business people

Raymond Gann joined the firm of Somnatica Corp. as vice president, finance, chief financial officer and treasurer. Somnatica develops, manufactures and markets diagnostic and monitoring equipment.

Douglas Schultz and Laszlo Nagy of Rochester have joined Ross Roy, an advertising and marketing communication firm.

Kathryn Blondin and Kathleen Griem have joined Ross Roy as account administrators. Blondin will work on the MCI account and Griem

will work with the Chrysler Interactive Videodisc account.

Film Craft Video of Farmington Hills has appointed Wayne C. of Auburn Hills, C.J. Johnson and Michael Mencer of Farmington Hills to its editorial and production staff.

Steve Potocsky was appointed residential sales manager for Century 21 Premiere. James Panaretos takes the reins as manager of the Business Opportunities Department at Century 21 Premiere. Bonnie David is the

Century 21 Premiere newly-named Director of Relocation Services and Joe Medwed assumes the post of Director of Recruiting and Training.

Linda Fleming, a sales executive with Jack Christensen Inc. East Office, Troy, a Michigan-based real estate firm and creator of the JCI Real Estate Marketing System, was named top salesperson for 1990.

Attorney Richard Littlefield has joined the Southfield law firm of Sommers, Schwartz, Silver & Schwartz, P.C. An associate attorney, Littlefield will be working in the area of commercial litigation.

William Marlon and Kevin Tevens have joined Ross Roy Ad-

vertising. Marlon will be senior copywriter and Tevens as copywriter.

Alan Glidenberg of Southfield has joined the firm of Rodecker & Co., an investment broker firm in New York, as a registered representative.

James Belkoff of Rochester Hills has joined Ross Roy Communications as junior copywriter and Kimberly Bida of Canton was promoted to technical support specialist.

Judy Bennett was promoted from vice president to first vice president at Michigan National Corporation. She is responsible for the administration of 22 branches in the Southfield and Dearborn markets.

Tal Yoo, MD was appointed medical director of behavioral medicine, Samaritan Health Center, Detroit.

Tracy White was promoted from account executive to senior account executive at Hermanoff & Associates, a full-service public relations firm in Farmington Hills.

Peter Kotula joined the Birmingham law firm of Colombo & Colombo as an associate attorney. He is a member of the State, American and Oakland County bar associations.

John MacInnes of Birmingham will retire Oct. 1 as president of the United Community Services of Metropolitan Detroit. He joined UCS in 1974 and has been involved in many

areas of serving the community since then.

Submit black-and-white photographs, if possible, for inclusion in this column. While we value the receipt of photographs, we are unable to use every photograph submitted.

If you want your photograph returned, please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Indicate in a margin on the front of the photograph that you want it returned. We will do our best to comply with your request.

Send information to: Business Editor, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150. Please include city of residence and a daytime telephone number where information can be verified.

## datebook

**FACILITY MANAGERS**  
Thursday, Aug. 15 - International Facility Management Association meets at 5:30 p.m. in Troy. Information: Elizabeth Leitschek, 468-6788.

**LOOK FOR A JOB**  
Saturday, Aug. 17 - "Outplaced, Displaced, Replaced, Fired, or Burned Out - why job search techniques fail" 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Drury Inn, southeast corner of I-75 and Big Beaver, Troy. Fee: \$95. Information: 649-4396. Sponsor: Job Hunt USA.

**WORDPERFECT**  
Tuesday, Aug. 20 - "Advanced WordPerfect" 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 23815 Northwestern Highway, Southfield. Non-member fee: \$225. Information: 353-4500. Sponsor: American Society of Employers.

**PROOFREADING**  
Tuesday, Aug. 20 - "Grammar

and Proofreading Skills" 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 23815 Northwestern Highway, Southfield. Non-member fee: \$225. Information: 353-4500. Sponsor: American Society of Employers.

**LOOK FOR A JOB**  
Wednesday, Aug. 21 - "Outplaced, Displaced, Replaced, Fired, or Burned Out - why job search techniques fail" 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Drury Inn, southeast corner of I-75 and Big Beaver, Troy. Fee: \$95. Information: 649-4396. Sponsor: Job Hunt USA.

Information for this column should be sent to the business editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

Information must be received by Monday to be published in the Thursday issue. Publication cannot be guaranteed.

Information should contain a daytime telephone number where information can be verified.

## marketplace

Labor & employment law attorneys Donald A. Van Sullichem and Malcolm D. Brown formed a new law firm, Van Sullichem & Brewa of Bloomfield Hills, devoted exclusively to representing employers in employment and labor matters. The address is 625 N. Woodward Ave., Suite 1000, Bloomfield Hills. The telephone number is 642-0900.

Maternal Child Healthcare Services of Birmingham opened its office at 30150 Telegraph, Suite 301, Birmingham. The phone number is 258-0710.

Howard & Howard new Bloomfield Hills office is at 1400 North Woodward, Suite 250, Bloomfield Hills 48304. The telephone number is 645-1483.

Hofor & Beatty/Salesmakers of Birmingham has received a 1990 "Marketing Excellence Award" from the Ford Motor Co.

PEP, Professional Event Planners Inc., has established an office in Troy. The office is at 755 Big Beaver. The phone number is 1-800-421-1PEP.

Sheila Sloan Public Relations Inc. received the International Association of Business Communicators 1990 Renaissance Award of Merit and an Honorable Mention for its

work in the past year.

W.B. Deuer & Co. of Southfield has earned 16 awards from competitions, including The One Show, National Addy, New York festivals, the ANDY Awards, the Art Directors Club and the CLIO Awards.

Hermanoff & Associates of Farmington Hills received a 1990 Renaissance Award of Excellence at the International Association of Business Communicators annual Renaissance Awards Banquet.

American Speedy Printing Centers Inc. of Bloomfield Hills was named an official printer of the 1991 International Summer Special Olympics Games. Participating American Speedy owners included Bill and Connie Greenman, Livonia-Northeast, Sherman and Helen Farr, Brighton, Jim and Sheron McCarthy, Farmington-Downtown, Sam & Carolyn DeSanto, Livonia-West, Gordon and Sharon Parker, Northville; Harvey Johnson and Coveri Culley, Farmington Hills-North, Glenn and Lynn Lowery, Southfield; and Donna and Al Spiteri, Livonia-Central.

Lucas SEI Wiring Systems Ltd. was nominated as development supplier for electrical wiring systems for the new Toyota vehicle to be manufactured at Toyota's United Kingdom sites in Burnaston, Derby and Shotton, Deeside, in late 1992.

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