

# BUSINESS

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88(F)

## SUBURBAN BUSINESS LEADERS

Good Management Services and HDZ Design have merged to become Design Management Association, partners Gayle Good, of Birmingham, and Bonnie Detloff Zielinski of Rochester Hills have announced. The new firm will focus on the production of quality publications, from concept through the production stage.



Good

Otto Haensler, vice president and managing director of The Towneend Hotel in Birmingham, has announced the appointment of Donald J. Kerr, Jr. to the position of director of sales and marketing.



Kerr

John S. Kolon, president of Kolon, Bittker & Desmond, Inc. announced the appointment of Jeffrey Peterman to the position of director of media services.



Peterman

Bloomfield Hills resident Robert L. Nicholls has been promoted to account supervisor/product merchandising at Intergraph Marketing & Promotions (IMP), a wholly-owned subsidiary of the D'Arcy Masius Benton & Bowles advertising agency.



Nicholls

Julie Verlage has been appointed director of marketing for Southfield-based Shield's Restaurant Bar & Pizzeria.



Verlage

To submit materials to this column, please send a brief biographical summary along with a black-and-white photo, if possible, to: Business Editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

## Dynamic duo says goodbyes

Leo Roddy doesn't work there anymore. For that matter, neither does Marilyn Wells.

Both retired last weekend from Model Wallpaper & Paint in Livonia. Roddy, the manager, had 51 years of service with the family-owned company. Wells, a sales rep hired by Roddy, had 20.

"When I was 14, my father sent me to the store to buy a roll of drywall tape," recalled Roddy, now 65. "When I went into the store, the gentleman (owner Carl Schramm) said, 'Do you want a job?'"

Roddy went back the next day and, except for a two-year stint in the Army, has worked for Schramm ever since. Roddy was paid \$5 a week for helping out after school and on Saturdays.

He has managed the Livonia store the past 27 years and has watched the industry evolve — at a considerable increase in pay.

"There's a lot more wallpaper sold," Roddy said. "It dresses up a room a lot more than a coat of paint. It lasts a long time. It gives you beauty, gives you a good feeling looking at wallpaper rather than a blank wall."

"Paints (today) hide better, cover better," he said. "They go on easier. Latex paint now cleans up easier. There's no odor to them."

Wells sought a job after her children were grown.

"I've probably helped decorate half of Livonia," she said. "We have some pretty nice customers. We know them personally. We were invited out to a lady's house the other day to see the results of our decorating. That happens frequently."

Wallpaper customers today seem to prefer contemporary design, Wells said, but traditional has a strong following.

"I don't think we'll ever lose the country look because people are so into antiques," she added.

Both Roddy and Wells kept up to date by talking with manufacturers



ART EMANUEL/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Long service: Leo Roddy and Marilyn Wells, colleagues at a wallpaper and paint store for some 20 years, retired last weekend on the same day.

Customer service is what the smaller independents use to compete against large department and specialty stores, Wells and Roddy agreed. "It's personal help," Roddy said. "They (customers) will tell us what they've got and we'll help them."

Roddy is stepping down now because he figures he's of retirement age and tax laws will take a big bite of his Social Security earnings if he continues to work. He plans to spend time finishing a second home in Kalkaska.

Wells, who plans to divide time between Michigan and Florida, said she's no longer physically up to the rigors of lifting heavy wallpaper sample books and paint cans.

Roddy said he never really thought about getting into another

line of work or working for someone else.

"It's nice being able to work by yourself and with your helpers and not having anyone to tell you what to do because you've been left in charge of the whole operation," he said.

Schramm, retired for 16 years, remembers Roddy well.

"I worked at the bomber plant (in the early 1940s) and the three of us, my wife, and him, kind of carried on during the war. It was a small store, a tiny hole in the wall, not much really."

"He was a loyal employee. He was on a level with my children. They all joined the business as they grew up," Schramm said.

"He's an honest and honorable man. I think he will be in and out. He's not just wiped out. If we need him, we'll call on him. He lives the business like I did," Schramm said.

## Saturn's founder reaches for stars

Wally Tsuha's dream of developing a full-service electronics supply firm has become reality. His entrepreneurial style includes team-building among employees and diversification of product line.

Wally Tsuha, owner of Saturn Electronics & Engineering in Rochester Hills, has enjoyed tremendous success since founding his company in 1985.

Last year, Saturn doubled sales to \$15 million and boosted employment at its plant here by nearly two dozen to 115. Tsuha acquired instant production capacity in Mississippi and Mexico, low-cost labor locales, by purchasing Beta Manufacturing.

Saturn, a major automotive supplier, has taken steps to diversify into the military and commercial subcontracting arenas.

Those were a few of the reasons that Tsuha was selected Master Entrepreneur of the Year by a panel looking for excellence in financial performance, innovation and personal commitment to business and community. The program was sponsored by Ernst & Young, a professional services firm; Inc. Magazine; Merrill Lynch; Comerica; WJR Radio; and Crain's Detroit Business.

"We have a good base of customers, very supportive, giving us an opportunity to work on products and prove ourselves," Tsuha said.

GM, Chrysler and Ford account for about 75 percent of his company's business now, Tsuha said. "By 1995, we hope other areas will grow faster than automotive so automotive will be about 50 percent," he said.

Saturn currently is working on tank components with General Dynamics Land Systems and with IBM and Masco on commercial applications, Tsuha said.

"Our original plan was to be a full-service electronics supplier, to take an idea, develop it into a concept, build a prototype, put it into production and deliver it to the customer," he said.



JIM RIDER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Quality check: Wally Tsuha, president of Saturn Electronics & Engineering, visits with Wanessa Wright in the production assembly area.

"Today, that turns out to be the right strategy."

"We believe we have some of the best people in Michigan working on our team," Tsuha said. "We try to stress team spirit, team effort. People are very responsive to that. We empower them to make decisions, come up with ideas. Because we're a young company, we can establish that culture."

Tsuha, 48, was selected Minority Entrepreneur of the Year last year in the

same program. Judges this year included William Parfet, president of Upjohn Co.; Rick Inatome, president of InaCom Corp.; Florine Mark, president of the W.W. Group; and David Brophy, associate professor at the University of Michigan.

"We're pretty aggressive trying to be a success," Tsuha said. "I devote a lot of time to projects. We're very team-oriented. We try to spread the entrepreneurial spirit all the way down

the team.

"We look for improvement in all areas of operation, not just production, but finance and accounting," he said. "We set quantifiable goals, what things are, where we're headed."

Saturn has posted a profit every year since its inception, Tsuha said. Last year's amounted to some \$750,000, he said.

See TSUHA, PREVIOUS PAGE



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