

**SUBURBAN  
BUSINESS  
LEADERS**

*Opting  
out of  
the toy  
tangle*

Southfield resident Paul Zimmerman has been promoted to vice president/creative director at IMP, a wholly-owned subsidiary of D'Arcy Masius Benton & Bowles/Bloomfield Hills.

In his new position, Zimmerman is responsible for events marketing, heading up creative for the Isuzu account as well as investigating additional client opportunities.



Paul Zimmerman

Gerald T. Hansen, headmaster of Detroit Country Day School in Beverly Hills has been elected to membership in The Headmasters Association, a 100-year-old national organization of heads of independent schools. Membership in The Headmasters Association is limited to 100 heads of schools.



Gerald T. Hansen

Karen L. Healy of Birmingham has been appointed director of media relations and communications for GM's Automotive Components Group Worldwide.



Karen L. Healy

Healy will be responsible for implementation of the ACC Worldwide public affairs vision as well as communication and public relations projects.

Henry Ford Health System has named Dr. Mark L. Rosenblum of West Bloomfield as chairman of the Henry Ford Medical Group's (HFMG) Department of Neurosurgery and director of the Midwest Neuro-Oncology Center at Henry Ford.



Dr. Mark L. Rosenblum

Dr. Rosenblum comes to HFHS from the University of California where he served as professor of Neurological Surgery. He also was a principal investigator of the university's Brain Tumor Research Center and a recipient of many national research grants.

■ A mother dissatisfied with choices at traditional toy stores has taken a position with a non-traditional children's product outlet, helping to expand the company beyond its catalog business.

BY GERALD FRAWLEY  
STAFF WRITER

Kids, especially small ones, can be difficult to buy for.

Sure, there are Dr. Seuss books, Playschool toys, Sesame Street items and a few other trusted names parents have come to rely on, but how far can that get you?

One birthday and two holidays? Maybe.

In a world where toys are based on Saturday morning cartoon shows and vice versa, where can a parent find wholesome, honest things to entertain their children?

That's what Ann G. Abrams of Bloomfield Hills wondered, and several years ago she discovered a small company out of California called Music For Little People that promised just that.

"I have two children of my own, and it's difficult to find things for them," she said. She added that while the usual merchandise found in traditional retail outlets have their place, she doesn't believe they are the end all for children.

She was impressed when she was first introduced to the Music For Little People line through a catalog.



JULI JACOBLED

**Tired of toys: When it comes to expanding children's horizons, some people find toys can only go so far. After discovering alternatives for her own children, a Bloomfield Hills mother has struck out on her own to bring them to others.**

Here was a small mail order company that sold products not meant just to keep kids busy and out of mom's hair, but to teach and expand their horizons.

When she discovered Music For Little People was launching a new effort late last year — direct marketing via Family Entertainment Consultants putting on home shows — she signed up and now sells the company's products in her spare time.

**Local origins**

Music For Little People was founded in 1985 in Redway, Calif., as a home based mail-order business selling musical instruments and audio recordings for children.

Founders Leib Ostrow and Linda Dillon-Ostrow, originally from southeast Michigan, launched the company in response to a shortage of quality music for their own children.

The company has quickly grown to more than 60 full-time and up to 60 part-time employees with sales upwards of \$10 million in 1992. That does not include its burgeoning force of independent consultants who sell the company's products at customer's homes.

Music For Little People has diversified with two record labels, Music

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**Optometrist organizes club for consumers to buy frames**

BY R.J. KING  
SPECIAL WRITER

The recent surge of frame discounts and two-for-one promotions by national eyewear chains left Dr. Roy Wilson, founder of Eyes & Optics in Farmington Hills, on an uneven playing field.

Because national chains have sizable advertising budgets and buy in large volumes, they can afford to lower frame prices to rock-bottom levels in hopes of attracting price-conscious consumers.

An independent like Wilson finds it difficult to compete against such marketing efforts. But if there were a way frame prices could be dropped without resorting to cutbacks in service, an independent optometrist would have the best of both worlds — low prices and steady revenues.

So taking a page from warehouse outlets, Wilson began lowering frame prices via a buyer's club. For an individual membership fee of \$25 per year, a customer can select among frames which are on average 60 percent below retail prices.

"The amount of advertising by the chains is staggering, while at the same time you're left to wonder what kind of service people are getting," said Wilson, a Livonia resident.

"When we started the buyer's club, we initiated a program where our price tags list the retail price, and right below that, the buyer's club price," said Wilson.

"On some of our higher-end designer frames, people can see a cost difference of between \$58 and \$100.

"What we're trying to do is break the mold that everything has to be on sale," said Wilson.

Of the 1,000-plus frames available at Eyes & Optics, Wilson said designer frames account for between 60 and 70 percent of total units sold. The 1,200-square-foot office, located near the corner of 14 Mile and Heggerty, has two employees.

One of the most popular frames of late, said Wilson, is a pair once known as granny glasses, where lenses are small circles set in wire frames so thin they all but disappear. The look has recently shown up on the fashion runways of Paris and Milan.

"The designer frames really became big in the 1980s, and they've just grown from there," said Wilson. "However, there is a move away from big, plastic glasses, and now people want designs which are smaller, more elegant."

Families of three or more can join the club for an annual fee of \$65. Like individual memberships, there is no limit on the number of frames purchased in a given year within a family.

Governor John Engler's office on job training and job issues."

Schall was on the White House domestic policy staff for the first half of the Bush years. In August, 1991, Secretary of Labor Lynn Martin offered Schall the chief of staff post on a recommendation from his White House boss.

During the long campaign, Martin was often on the road, leaving Schall to manage the department, he said.

"Job training and retraining was one of the highest priorities in the Bush administration," he said. "And it will continue to be

in the Clinton administration. The Democrats agree with this.

"Although there was a lot of controversy during the campaign, now the consensus among economists is that the economy is growing. Unemployment nationally is at 7.3 percent. In Michigan, the rate is 7.9 percent.

"It won't drop quickly. During the 1990s and into the next century, the economy will change quickly but employment will stick upwards. General Motors will continue to downsize. Job retraining will be really important.

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**Key labor aide to refocus skills**

BY MARY RODRIGUE  
STAFF WRITER

A chief of staff to the U.S. secretary of labor, Livonia native John Schall managed day-to-day operations for the department of 18,500 government employees. But as a political appointee of the Bush administration, Schall is looking for a new job.

Although still in Washington, Schall is packing up his D.C. condo with one eye on Michigan politics.

"I'm trying to figure out what to do," said Schall. "Beginning Monday, I'll be a consultant to