

SUBURBAN BUSINESS LEADERS

Brian D. Pollice of Rochester Hills has become a shareholder of McEnderfer, Hoke Bernhard, P.C., Bloomfield Hills-based Certified Public Accounting and Management Consulting Firm.



Brian D. Pollice

Paul L. Hall, senior vice president at Casey Communications Management, Inc. has been appointed to key environmental positions at two national professional organizations.



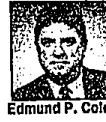
Paul L. Hall

Joseph B. Anderson, Jr. has been named president and chief executive officer of Composite Energy Management Systems Inc. in Southfield. He was previously general director of the body hardware business unit of Inland Flasher Guide, a \$1 billion division of General Motors.



Joseph B. Anderson, Jr.

Edmund P. Cole has joined the professional staff of Heber Fuger Wendlin, Inc. as an investment advisor managing investment portfolios of commercial banks, pension funds, corporations and individuals.



Edmund P. Cole

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 48160. There is no charge.



JOHN RIDER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Mary Lujan says she's spending nearly \$2 million to acquire and remodel a library to consolidate her furniture/accessories stores.

Steady growth fuels big expansion

By keeping an eye on the future, Mary Lujan has been able to parlay her interest in crafts into a business with sales of some \$2 million.

By DOUG FUNKE, STAFF WRITER

Mary Lujan admits that she started a furniture and home accessories business in 1984 mainly for diversion, to get out of the house, something to do. It's gone well beyond that now. Lujan is spending almost \$2 million to acquire and renovate the former Rochester Hills Library to consolidate her two successful Main Street operations, Generations and Hepplewhite's.

She recently expanded her work force to 26 from 14 and anticipates boosting sales this year to \$3 million from \$2 million. She said her profit margin is in the range of 7 to 11 percent.

"When I first started, I had a lot of energy and I needed to channel that," said Lujan, 50, an Oakland Township resident. "I still do." The new store, Generations/Hepplewhite's, will feature some 30 individual sales nooks from which to display stock. "We're basically a special-order store," Lujan said. "We will sell off the floor, but when you get into design furniture, people want to special order. We'll sell accessories off the floor."

Counting on special orders for big ticket items also enables her to keep costly inventory down. Lujan jumped into the business with a \$20,000 loan from her husband, Joseph, a lawyer. "That went to renting the building, buying inventories," she said. "We started making money right away. I did craft items I made myself, painted little houses in back of the store. I paid him back. It took four years."

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Leave law prompts firms to examine current policy

By MARY RODRIGUE, STAFF WRITER

For some local businesses, the new family leave bill passed by Congress last week has raised questions about implementation. But many suburban businesses say they already offer more than the new federal legislation will mandate.

It's worth noting, however, that while many companies provide time off, it's often without paid benefits. The Family and Medical Leave Act will provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a newborn or adopted baby, or to care for a family member who is seriously ill. Under the bill, employees will continue to get health care coverage and are guaranteed their job or a comparable one upon return.

Companies with fewer than 50 employees are exempted. The law takes effect in six months. "We're waiting for an official version to come down," said Linda Bayly, personnel manager for the Budd Co., an auto parts supplier in Troy with 10,000 workers in the Midwest, Eastern states and Canada.

"The question I have is how

many will take advantage of it if no pay is involved? I'm also wondering about how it will affect the organization if many are gone at the same time." She conceded many production jobs at Budd are interchangeable. "Our policy is that we offer up to four months leave after the birth of a baby. In our UAW plants, there is a year leave available," Bayly said. "I think most large companies are willing to work with an employee who needs personal leave."

Kathy Ortiz, manager of administrative services for SOC Credit Union in Troy, is also waiting to see how the new legislation will affect her company. "We have approximately 30 full-time and 30 part-time employees," she said. "I don't know if part-timers are included in the count. We've always had a leave policy, but we're small. We can handle those things on a one-to-one basis."

"Everyone is trying to keep costs down, to run business effectively and efficiently. But it's not my position to make a statement on behalf of the credit union." Gayla Hauser, president of the

Troy Chamber of Commerce, says her organization opposes the measure.

"Looking at the big picture, the not in favor of anything that is mandated for business, anything that adds to the cost of operation."

Hauser says Troy businesses banded together a few years ago to create Family Works of Troy, which provides employers with assistance in meeting the dependent care needs of their employees. Services include information and referral for elder and child care, workplace bulletin boards and seminars, community outreach programs, and assistance to employers in planning for dependent care.

"This is an outstanding private sector initiative," said Hauser of the program which has already won several state awards. It is supported by many of the city's larger employers, like the Budd Co., Dana Corp., DuPont, Entech Services, Handleman Company, Kmart, Kelly Services, Saturn Corp., the SOC Credit

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Confidence key to auto sales, consultant-trainer maintains

By GERALD FRAWLEY, STAFF WRITER

Ever think that the worst part about buying a car is dealing with the salesperson?

According to James P. Boyle, president of the new automotive sales training company Boyle & Associates in Rochester Hills, that's a fairly common sentiment.

"It doesn't have to be that way," he said. Too many salespeople make a poor impression because they've never really had any training.

"Good salespeople are not born; of course, some people have more talent than others," he said. "The key to being a good

salesperson is to sell yourself," he said. "Selling cars is almost an afterthought."

"Of course, selling the cars is the point, but you can't do that unless you have faith in yourself," Boyle said. "You have to sell the auto with all the confidence and enthusiasm that you have in yourself."

"I try to build a foundation so salespeople can be confident in themselves."

Boyle, a 25-year veteran in retail automobile sales, said automotive dealerships have a salesperson turnover of more than 100 percent. Too often, a new person is hired and shown quickly

around the showroom, given a desk, and told to go to it, he said.

John Swanson, a salesman with Roseville Chrysler Plymouth, said he already has a solid foundation when he first met Boyle. Boyle was a sales manager for Roseville Chrysler Plymouth.

Even a salesman with a good foundation can use a little help now and then, he added.

"He has tremendous patience," Swanson said. When coupled with his vast experience as a salesperson and manager, his patience is invaluable when it comes to training new salespeople.

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