

THURSDAY, JUNE 3, 1993

# BUSINESS

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## SUBURBAN BUSINESS LEADERS

Edgar E. Parks, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Albert Kahn Associates, Inc. has retired after 41 years of service, eight of those years as CEO of the firm.

In planning for a leadership transition, Parks announced his retirement plans in May 1992.

Virgil H. Carr, an experienced and award winning human care administrator, has been named president of the United Way for Southeastern Michigan.

Carr has been president and chief executive officer of United Way of Chicago since 1988 and previously served as president and CEO of Family Service of Detroit and Wayne County, a local United Way agency.

NBD Bancorp has appointed first vice president, Alexander C. Robinson, Jr., chief quality officer for all of its banking subsidiaries.

In this newly created position, Robinson is responsible for developing and implementing a total quality plan throughout NBD Bancorp and its subsidiaries in Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana and Florida. He will initiate measurement standards and facilitate a corporate focus on quality that is responsive to the needs of customers.

See more business leaders, 3C



Parks



Carr



Robinson, Jr.

## Envelope Co. stays ahead of techno-glut



Technology's rush has yet to put a hurt on the Birmingham-based Wolf Envelope Co., which still produces up to 3 million envelopes a day.

By DOUG FUNKE  
Staff Writer

Twenty-six plaques for product excellence line a wall of the 3,500-square-foot administrative headquarters of Wolf Envelope Co. tucked away on the second level of South Adams Square in Birmingham.

In this age of fax machines, computer electronic bulletin boards and satellite communications, Wolf continues to supply envelopes to some 300 business clients during this 70th year of operation.

"We're in a fairly competitive industry," said Hugh F. Mahler, 44, owner/president.

"We sell to the financial industry, do some work for medical filing, bank drive-in envelopes, bank statement envelopes, x-ray filing envelopes. We get involved in general mailing. Utility bills we produce."

Mahler, who started in customer service after graduating from the University of Michigan, has spent virtually his entire working career with Wolf in sales and marketing.

He ultimately succeeded his father, John, as general manager, and jumped at the chance to purchase the

Detroit, and Indiana operations in 1990.

"I've developed a fondness for the business," he said. "It's an industry that has a lot of variety. Each customer has a unique need. A customer may look for a supplier not only to supply quality product, but help in inventory management or solve a postal regulation problem."

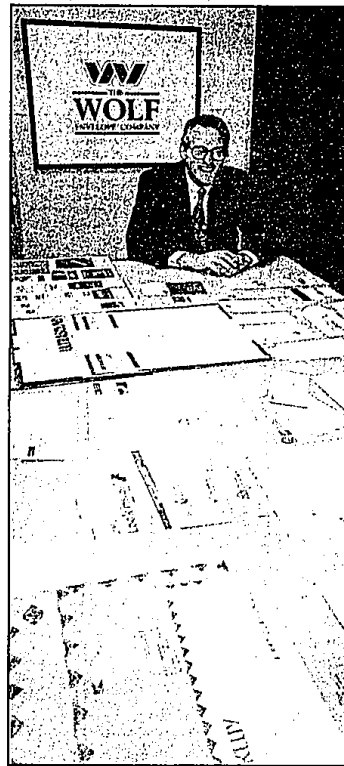
Wolf, originally based in Cleveland, opened a Detroit branch in 1923 to service the burgeoning auto industry and spin-off business growth. In 1984, Wolf closed a combination manufacturing/administrative facility in Detroit and moved the offices to Oakland County and the plant to Indiana.

The company always has been profitable, Mahler said, but he declined to reveal details other than peg annual sales at about \$10 million.

"We produce 2 1/2-3 million envelopes a day," he said. "We die cut, we do typesetting, make plates. We have a printing operation. We put the window in and glue on the back."

Major customers include Ford, NBD and Kmart.

See ENVELOPE, 2C



Enveloped: Hugh Mahler, owner and president of Wolf Envelope Co. in Birmingham, doesn't foresee an end to the need for his product in the business world despite all the advancements in telecommunications technology.

STEPHEN CANTRELL  
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## Lawrence Tech engineers create 'The No. 1 Response' to Ford's hybrid challenge

By CHRIS MCCOSKY  
Staff Writer

You get the feeling that when the Ford Hybrid Electric Vehicle (HEV) Challenge concludes on Saturday, Doug Callahan may just collapse in a heap and not stir for a couple of days.

For the better part of six months, Callahan has been holding up on a steady diet of adrenalin and anxiety as he and his Lawrence Technological University engineering team prepared their car for this unique national intercollegiate competition.

"You'll have to forgive me if I don't make a lot of sense," said the Troy resident prior to a phone interview Thursday. "I haven't been getting much sleep."

Not much. He'd been up for 36 straight hours. But it doesn't take long to realize that Callahan, sleep or no sleep, has never felt more awake and alive.

"We started out with a blank sheet of paper and built something that we can put on the road," said Callahan, who graduated from Lawrence Tech in February and has put his own career on hold until after the HEV Challenge. "It is such a great feeling. There's really nothing like it."

Callahan, the project manager, and 48 other Lawrence Tech students under the tutelage of faculty advisors Charles Schwartz and Nick Breck, have built "The No. 1 Response," a sporty, 3,000-pound, two-passenger commuter vehicle roughly the size of a Ford Tempo with a hybrid engine that is powered by both fuel and electricity.

"It has a fast-back rear, similar to a bubble-butt Porsche and the hood looks a little like a Thunderbird," Callahan said.

Best of all worlds

But it's the engine that makes The No. 1 Response one of the favorites in the "Ground-up" Class of the HEV competition, which features 11 other schools including Michigan State and Cal Poly Tech that built cars from scratch. "Our scenario is, what if they turn Los Angeles into a zero emissions zone and you live in the

### ALL-AREA ENGINEERING TEAM

Here are the members of the Lawrence Tech engineering team (listed with hometowns) competing in the Ford Hybrid Electric Vehicle Challenge this week.

Charles Schwartz (faculty) Dearborn  
Nick Breck (faculty) . . . Milford  
Doug Callahan (project mgr.) Troy  
Brett Affholter . . . Redford  
James O'Connor . . . Troy  
Norm Hanson . . . Southfield  
Ken Breck . . . Center  
John Murphy . . . Detroit  
Paul Furman . . . Farmington  
Mike Butler . . . Redford  
Dave Huelke . . . Ann Arbor  
Mark Emmekamp . . . Dearborn

suburbs?" Callahan said. "We've designed a system where you could use your gas motor when you are driving outside the city, then once you get into the city, you can flip a switch and drive on electricity."

The Response engine actually operates in three modes: A regular alternate power internal combustion mode, an electric mode and a hybrid mode that allows the electrical batteries to regenerate while driving in the alternate power mode.

"Our goal was to build a vehicle that would be acceptable in today's market," Callahan said. "One that operates no differently than an automatic vehicle. We feel real good about it, real good."

Callahan estimates the base price to build The Response is around \$10,000, but with other necessary production costs, Callahan guesses the car would sell on the market for about \$25,000.

### Glimpsing the future

Callahan and his 10-person Lawrence Tech team — which is a veritable Observer & Eccentric All-Area engineering team (see the line-up) — took The Response into competition Monday at the Ford Research Engineering facility in Dearborn. The cars will be put through a series of laboratory and over-the-road tests judging emissions, fuel efficiency, vehicle range, acceleration, drivability, design, cost, oral and

written presentations.

"This competition is an important opportunity to strengthen relations between the automotive industry and learning institutions," said Dr. John P. McTague, Ford's vice president for technical affairs. "We want to challenge college students to think ahead to the future of automotive engineering."

The challenge will offer another glimpse into the future of road travel: Detroit Edison "Park and Charge" battery charging stations.

"This presents a unique and important opportunity to test how well the charging stations will perform in the future when they become integral parts of the infrastructure needed to accommodate drivers of electric vehicles," John Olson, Edison's electric vehicle program manager said.

Edison will provide 30 stations.

### Passing through Livonia

The main event of the competition, the range event, takes place Friday. The 100-mile event will test the cars' zero emissions and hybrid driving modes.

All the cars — the 12 ground-up cars and another 18 converted Ford Escorts featuring one from Wayne State — will caravan along a route from Dearborn to Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn. The caravan will proceed on Hines Drive through Dearborn Heights, Westland, Livonia, Plymouth, Northville, Ann Arbor, Saline and Clinton.

It should pass through Livonia along Hines Drive through Plymouth Road between 10:15 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. Friday, stopping briefly at the Ford Transmission and Chassis Division on Plymouth Road in Livonia.

Over \$75,000 in awards will be doled out to winners in various categories, but that's not the motivating force for Callahan.

"Just to finish a project like this and have it succeed is what it's all about," he said. "It's an amazing feeling."

Alma sat up as a full night's rest, but Callahan wouldn't know about that, yet.

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