

BIDCO from NEXT PAGE

alties. If a company does well, we do well."

Loans typically last 3-5 years. Onset managers won't formally sit on a client's board of directors, but will attend management meetings and offer advice if requested.

Picking a winner

Onset, which listens to more than 100 investment proposals a year, seriously considers only about 20 percent and says yes to 5 percent.

"We want to invest in engineering, manufacturing, technical companies," Aspatore said. "Certain things we shy away from — oil and gas. We have no particular expertise here. Real estate."

"Three quarters of the companies we've invested in, they're growing and need new inventory, they're entering a new market, they need customer support, specialized support," Eisenberg said. So what makes for a good investment?

"For and away the most important factor is the management team," Braun said of a loan applicant. "After that, we do typical due diligence. We look at the product, market, competition, evaluate the manufacturing process."

Good cash flow is important, too, Aspatore said.

"We're not interested in start-ups," Eisenberg said. "We don't invest in turnarounds. We don't invest in a way, they could do with-

out (our) money, but maybe they wouldn't grow as fast," Braun said.

Livonia base is perfect

Onset, which now has about \$1.6 million to invest from revolving repayments of loans and earnings, recently received a line of credit of \$2 million from a bank to make future loans that have potential.

"Banks lending money to us look at our portfolio, record, management," Aspatore said.

But Eisenberg noted the irony of the situation. "In essence, they're making a loan to an organization who makes loans they won't make."

Aspatore, Braun, Eisenberg, Janice Shabet, a financial analyst, and a receptionist tend to all of Onset's day-to-day business activities.

"Livonia is reasonably central to all of our investments," Aspatore said. "This is just a good, common-sense location."

When Onset's loans spark business success, plenty of people can share in the rewards.

"Large companies in Michigan have been decreasing employment," Braun said. "Job growth in the recent past and probably in the future will come from small business."

"The type of financing we provide... provides jobs that otherwise may not happen," Aspatore said.

Scooters embodied youthful abandon



AUTO TALK
DAN MCCOSH

Once again, the Meadowbrook Concours D'Elegance will not honor the Cushman motor scooter as its featured marquee.

I have to assume it's an honest oversight, although the rising popularity of Cushman collectibles has pushed the asking price of a really good Cushman Eagle up into the low four figures, an incredible sum compared to the hundred bucks or so a good Eagle brought back when it was a couple of years old.

and the generally cavalier attitude society had towards youth in general. Life in the fast lane was a Lambretta, Vespa or a Cushman Eagle. The latter being sort of a miniature Harley Davidson powered by a modified lawn mower engine.

Motor scooters satisfied the blood lust of early adolescent for anything powered on wheels. The first kid I knew that had total freedom on wheels was a friend of mine who bought a Lambretta motor scooter with his paper route money. After a couple of years or so struggling with broken clutch cables, pushing the thing home and delivering the papers on foot, I was ready for a British sports car.

who drove a Cushman Eagle seemed to have a job, or at least admitted to one. Eagles reached their peak when Baby Huey drove one to a class record at Detroit Dragway powered by nitromethane model airplane fuel, a feat that should have guaranteed a place at Meadowbrook if nothing else did.

But as it turned out, motor scooters were a short-lived interlude in motoring history that eventually went the way of the Schwinn bicycle. Honda raised the specter of import competition that actually kept running, and then the liability attorneys and a safety-conscious public finished them off.

They were, of course, probably the most dangerous vehicles ever sold. Not just because of the combination of a 40-mph top speed guided by a mindless adolescent in the full throes of hormonal development. Mainly, the scooters

tapped deep into the fevered imaginations of youth, heated up by visions of Lee Marvin and Marlon Brando (who actually drove a Triumph).

Puttering along on tiny wheels, the horizon was limitless, the dangers of the road easily vanquished. If your heroes weren't cowboys, they soon would be.

Now that I think about it, Meadowbrook is better off without a scooter display. Today, they would probably be only a dim reflection of the best days of summer.

Dan McCosh is automotive editor of Popular Science magazine. If you have a comment, question or suggestion concerning Auto Talk, write to Dan McCosh, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, 48150, or you can call him directly by dialing 953-2047, mail box number 1870, on a touch-tone phone.

That was when you could get a license to drive a motor scooter when you were 14 years old, a concept that had something to do with the Jewish rites of manhood

Anyways, for some reason, most of the Italian scooters ended up on paper routes, while the Cushman leaned up against the Dairy Queen, looking tough. Nobody

Tax from NEXT PAGE

high, it will make a big difference. "Business has been basically steady. This may give it a shot in the arm," Arlington said.

"We have good schools. That's important to buyers and sellers. Money has to come from some place. It's going to come from people who live and work here."

Several thousand dollars can make a difference in whether a buyer orders a new house at the upper end, said Fred Capaldi, a Rochester Hills builder and president of the Builders Association of Southeastern Michigan.

"I know I build in the low \$200,000s and they're scrounging

for the last dollar they can get out of income or mortgage," Capaldi said. "Everyone has a saturation point."

Buyers feel more comfortable paying on principal and interest than taxes, he added.

Capaldi, anticipating alternative taxes to replace the school

tax, is concerned that financial institutions could make it more difficult to qualify on income guidelines. But for now, he's happy.

"I'm sure it's going to be a boost to us," Capaldi said. "How much, I don't know."

SUBURBAN BUSINESS LEADERS

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.

John T. Donaldson, Jr. has been named director of system marketing at ANR Pipeline Company.

The Jervis B. Webb Company has chosen Paul Clark as quality achiever of the month. Clark is Network Administrator in the information service department.

Marjorie Duncanson was promoted to director of branch operations,

a position in which she will oversee operations at The Bank's three regional branch offices and manage Franklin's new business center.

Also at Franklin Bank, Gayl Trepanier was promoted to Southfield branch manager and Dean G. Konwinski was promoted to assistant branch manager of the bank's Birmingham bank.

WWJ Newspadio health reporter Pat Sweetling was recently honored with the Red Cross "Buddies For Life Award" for her individual support of the community blood supply.

George S. Bak has been named vice president, management

supervisor of the Buick Account at McCann-Erickson Detroit.

West Bloomfield resident Carolyn C. Palmer, director of human resources for Ellis/Naeyaert/Genheimer Associates Inc. in Troy, has been elected president of the Human Resources association of Greater Detroit.

Erle Galladorfer of Farmington was recently named territorial executive for the Zurich-American Insurance Group's Michigan Office.

In his new position, he will be the decision maker responsible for both the customer contact and geographic management within the north central territory.

The following earned Truck

Significant Achievement Awards from Ford Motor Company awards that recognize employees who best exemplify technological achievement, product innovation and work effort: James Mason from Bloomfield Hills, Aaron Shira from Troy, Sal G. Khoury from Troy, William Dodge from Farmington Hills, Susan Hills from Farmington Hills, Chris Cavallero from Farmington Hills and Ray Schneider from Farmington.

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COMPUTER OUTLET

To find the home of your dreams, you need to know where to look.

Check the chimney. Cracks can send your investment up in smoke.

Peek in the attic. Old insulation can drive energy bills through the roof.

Examine gutters. Replacing an old system can increase financial drainage.

See what's on top. Old or weathered shingles can spring more leaks in your cash pool.

Inspect foundation. Cracks or holes open the door to unwanted guests.

Consider what's inside. An old furnace could cost an unexpected chill through your household.

Scrutinize finances. Be sure your monthly payment fits the bill.

Check windows. Replacement costs can spoil your view.

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