VIP greases up for education

By JANUE TIGAR-KRAMER
SPECIAL WRITCH
These days, Larry Detjen knows what sort of week he's having by the amount of grease under his nails.
Since Nov. 1, the new president of Lexington, Ky-based Valvoline Instant Oil Change has visited more than 14 company-owned sprvice stores in nine states "to learn the business from the bottom up," as he put it.
The junket, called President in the Pits, brought Detjen, 41, to three Valvoline centers in Observer, & Eccentric country last week, where he greeted customers, made sales presentations, worked under the hood and, generally, "got down and dirty," he sald.
The VIP stopped at Valvoline centers at 31005 Greenfield, Beverly Hills, 2635 Plymouth Road, Redford Township; and 22686 Grand River, Parmington.
Detjen's company-issued overalls were grease-free until 11 a.m., when local business people began to fill the Farmington center's four bays, which handle about 65 cerrs a day. Everett Morgan, assistant manager, and the store's seven technicians, say this lunch.

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Delien worked on three cars in a half-hour, checking fluid levels, air filters, PCV valves, breather filters, coolant and the like.

How did the customers react to the VIP service? Most didn't notice because the Farmington center, whose sales volume is second highest in the Michigan-Toledorgion, is a customer friendly place, anyway. The conter's especially popular with local business people, who stay in their car during servicing to read or use the car phone.

ing servicing to tend of the phone.
"I'm not here to show our employees how to do their work. My interest is in training, and that's what I'm emphasizing here," said beign, whose own on-the-job training will make him technican-certified in about two weeks.
Until then, even his work was double-checked by the assistant

double-checked by the assistant manager.
Besides pushing employee edu-cation, Valvoline stresses commu-nity involvement. This year, its 29 Detroit-nea stores are toy col-lection centers for the Sarah Fisher Home in Farmington Hills. Customers who bring a new,



Under the hood: Larry Detien, Valvoline Instant Oil Change president, visited local service outlets to empha-size the company's SuperPro training.

unwrapped toy to a center through Thursday, Dec. 23, get \$5 off an oil change and maintenance check.

Here's a list of the Valvoline toy collection centers in the Observer & Eccentric area: 29335 Six Mile, 28434 Joy, 32850 Plymouth, Road, 2686 Grand River, Farmington.



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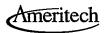
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