



THE DRATHS CORPORATION

Harnessing biology to replace petroleum

Most of us are keenly aware of our dependence on petroleum products when we're at the pump. But how about when we paint the living room or toss a box of plastic garbage bags in the grocery cart?

Everyday products like plastics, paints, nylon and resins are commonly manufactured with petroleum-based chemicals. The Draths Corporation's mission is to change that.

Described as "a next generation chemical company," Draths Corporation uses renewable feedstocks to create materials that replace petroleum-based chemicals in manufacturing. Using environmentally friendly and economical processes, Draths' work helps reduce carbon footprints without absorbing the higher costs generally associated with renewable initiatives.

Founded by John Frost and Karen Draths to commercialize technology developed in their MSU laboratory, the Draths Corporation will soon relocate from Okemos to its new \$41.3 million headquarters now being built in Delhi Township. Draths expected to hire six employees by the end of 2009, and projects that they will add a total of 200 new jobs by 2014.

Township officials are excited about the company. Delhi Township Manager John Elsinga cites the jobs it creates for the local and regional economy. Township Supervisor Stuart Goodrich says, "We are thrilled with it," and adds that the word is out that Delhi

Township is open to working with businesses.

Draths Corporation's new headquarters will be at 4055 English Oak Drive, Lansing. Current contact information may be found at drathscorporation.com.

Draths Corporation uses renewable feedstocks to create materials that replace petroleum-based chemicals in manufacturing.



Save on security with CRRP rebate

LOCAL COMPANIES OFFER SECURITY DEVICES

Improving the security of their buildings is a concern for some of our local business owners—so the DDA wants to make such improvements more affordable.

The Commercial Rehabilitation Rebate Program (CRRP) offers Holt business owners a 50 percent rebate on qualifying security devices on the exterior of buildings. And two companies right here in Holt are ready to help their fellow businesspeople select the right systems for their businesses.

ASK, INC.

For more than 15 years, ASK has specialized in security of a different type, providing a full range of managed IT products and services. “It now becomes a crisis if a company’s computer system fails,” said president Michael Maddox. So ASK doesn’t wait for a crisis to occur. “We focus on the prevention of problems rather than just fixing them after they happen.” ASK’s affordable monthly monitoring plan offers “24/7, 365-days-a-year peace of mind,” Michael said.

Now they’ve identified an additional way to provide their clients peace of mind. ASK offers security hardware, including cameras, and hourly as-needed IT support for security projects. Michael said clients can be sure they’re getting a good value, because ASK has done the research to make certain the products they sell are of the best quality.

He added that the security such devices provide goes beyond simply deterring theft. He believes there’s an added value in the peace of mind such a system offers a company’s employees.

ASK, Inc. is at 3125 Sovereign Drive, Suite 9B, Lansing, 1-877-ASK-4-ASK, (877-275-4275), justask.net.



Michael Maddox is president of ASK, Inc.

METRONET TELECOM

Metronet Telecom, Inc., is a total telecommunications provider. To company president David Choma, that means providing local services and great pricing to help any business communicate better at a lower cost.

Businesses turn to Metronet Telecom for local and long distance telephone service, voice mail, voice and data cabling, computer/telephone integration, and cellular/wireless phone services. However, David said, “We take things a step further than most companies,” encouraging clients to continue to call on Metronet after their purchase if they need assistance. “It’s our way of standing behind our products.”

Metronet also invites clients to visit their showroom to try out and compare products before they buy. That includes Metronet’s newest product offering, IP Panasonic security cameras.



David Choma is president of Metronet Telecom.

These cameras allow business owners to monitor from a remote location via the internet. To Metronet, adding security cameras to its product mix simply provides another way they can help local businesses operate more effectively at a lower cost. “We invite businesses to come in and play with this system hands-on, so they can see what this security system could offer their company,” David said.

Metronet Telecom is at 2182 N. Cedar Street, Holt, (517) 694-1101, metronet.cc.

DELHI BUSINESS EXPO HELPED BUSINESSES, PUBLIC MEET

“A great way to network and meet people!”

Delhi businesspeople were enthusiastic in their responses to the first-ever Delhi Business Expo, held October 21 at Holt High School.

Owners and representatives of more than 60 local businesses took part in the Expo. The pre-Expo session for participants included a presentation by keynote speaker

Jane Aldrich, WLNS TV anchor and owner of *Joyworks*, as well as time to network with their fellow businesspeople.

The vendor portion of the Expo was designed to introduce the public to the variety of goods and services available from Delhi businesses. Surveys completed by exhibitors noted that the Expo was a great opportunity to network with others in the business community, and expressed optimism that future Expos will have increased public awareness and attendance.

Dr. Novello, DDS

Dr. Michael J. Novello has been a part of the Holt community for 30 years, providing family-friendly dentistry.

“Getting to know the people in the area has been one of the best parts of having a practice here,” Dr. Novello said. “Now that we’ve been operating for 30 years, I’m able to not only serve people I’ve watched grow up, but also their children and grandchildren.”

Children make up a large part of Dr. Novello’s practice, and he believes it’s important to make sure children view the dentist as a fun, safe place rather than something scary. That’s why he and his staff talk children through each phase of cleaning and treatment. “We show and explain to them everything we are doing before we do it,” Dr. Novello said. “This way there are no surprises and no pain.” Dr. Novello also offers stuffed animal giveaways to make visits fun for his young patients.

Dr. Novello feels it’s his service and the way he treats all of his guests that make his practice

special. “Everyone graduates with the same technical skills and has the same technical equipment,” he explained, “so it’s up to us to set ourselves apart.”

Dr. Novello takes pride in doing what he can to help out the community that has been so generous in helping his practice grow and thrive. “I always donate to local events and projects because the community has provided me with loyal patients,” he said. “Because they’ve supported me, I want to support them.”

He also appreciates the things the township and the DDA have done to make the community a better place to live and work. He notes the sidewalk and landscaping that were added around his building, and especially the “tremendous effort in cleaning up Cedar Street, which has increased traffic by my business, helping to drive people to the Holt area.”

Dr. Novello’s practice is at 2500 Cedar Street, Holt, 694-3111.



Breathing Easier

WITH ALLERGY AND ASTHMA CONSULTANTS



Four years ago, Allergy and Asthma Consultants of Mid-Michigan moved their practice to Delhi Township. Evidently the practice filled a need here. As the only allergy and asthma practice in this area, demand has grown so much that they’ve added new staff, including another allergist.

The practice focuses on comprehensive allergy care for both adult and pediatric patients, including care for asthma, allergic rhinitis/hay fever, eczema, hives, bee sting allergies, food allergies and sinus problems.

“Fifty million Americans have allergies or asthma, and for a lot of people it affects their quality of life, oftentimes forcing them to be absent from school and work,” said Ridhu C. Burton, M.D., of Allergy and Asthma

Consultants. “Being an allergist is a rewarding field because I get to make my patients’ everyday quality of life better.” Allergies never go away, Dr. Burton said. “I often get to watch my patients grow up, knowing that my services have made a significant contribution to their quality of life.”

The practice building is kept completely allergy free for the patients’ comfort. “It’s important that we keep our office allergy free so that we practice what we preach,” Dr. Burton said.

Allergy and Asthma Consultants serves the entire Lansing area. While most of its patients are referred by their family physicians, anyone who would like personalized allergy testing or care is welcome to make an appointment.

“There is a wide range of things people can become allergic to, some common and others uncommon,” Dr. Burton said. “For this reason it’s important that people get tested if they feel like they are having a reaction so that they can start living life to its highest quality.”

Allergy and Asthma Consultants of Mid-Michigan is at 4169 Legacy Parkway, Lansing, 394-6500, lansingallergy.com



BUILT TO LAST: Red Wing Shoes

From outfitting World War I soldiers to appearing in Norman Rockwell illustrations, Red Wing Shoes have seen some high-profile assignments. But from their inception in 1905 to today, they're best known for being hardworking footwear that's built to last.

"One of the first things a customer associates with Red Wing is quality," says Mike Repins, owner of the Holt and Lansing Red Wing franchises. That reputation has helped the brand—and Repins' stores—weather the economy. "Guys who have had Red Wings are not going to leave us, even if times are tough," Mike says. He adds that most of his customers believe "you get what you pay for"—and many first-time customers say they came in because they've grown tired of replacing cheaper boots every two or three months. With Red Wing, Mike says, the quality and craftsmanship are evident.

The service is unbeatable, too. Mike encourages customers who purchase a pair of boots or shoes to stop in every six to eight weeks to have their footwear treated. In addition, says Mike, "We do free cleaning, polishing, conditioning, free

laces...any minor repair for the life of the boot or shoe."

Mike estimates a pair of Red Wing work boots will last one to two years, depending on how they're used. But he also encourages customers to bring their worn Red Wings in to be resoled. "We compare soles on our work boots to tires on a car," Mike says, and resoling can add another year or more to the footwear's life. His stores resole about 10 pairs a week.

Mike has been in the shoe business for 30 years. He became the general manager of the Lansing and Holt Red Wing stores in March of 2001 with the goal of purchasing the franchises, which he did in early 2007. Sixty percent of the Holt store's business is safety toe footwear, and more than half of that is account business, including MSU and the Board of Water & Light.

Mike says the Holt store has a good, consistent customer base and he enjoys being part of the community. "I love being here," he says.

Red Wing Shoes in Holt is at 2490 Cedar Street, 694-0111.



Holiday TV Wrap-up

This year, 44 Delhi businesses took part in what has become an annual event: the "Shop Holt" holiday TV advertising campaign. Hundreds of 30-second commercials—each featuring two local businesses—aired throughout the month on Fox 47. The campaign was a co-operative venture, with the DDA covering half the cost of each merchant package.

Thanks to all who participated and helped put our business community in the spotlight!



Capital Pharmacy



LEADERS IN NUCLEAR MEDICINE PRODUCTS

Capital Pharmacy doesn't have the kind of customers who come in to have a prescription filled or pick up a bottle of Tylenol. Their customers are hospitals and outpatient imaging centers.

Established in 1994, Capital Pharmacy has grown to become the leading provider of radiopharmaceuticals to mid-Michigan. And what are radiopharmaceuticals? As Randy Asmus, president of Capital Pharmacy, explains, they are radioactive drugs used in diagnostic procedures. These injectable drugs travel to different parts of the body where they can be picked up by medical cameras to create an image similar to an X-ray.

Capital's pharmacists have more than 40 years' combined experience in the nuclear medicine field. They mix the radioactive component with the drug product to produce more than 20 different injectable nuclear medicine compounds. Capital produces approximately 500 injections a day.

Not surprisingly, these medicines require special handling and disposal. Although they produce low energy and can be easily shielded, they are heavily regulated—by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Department of Transportation, the Pharmacy Board and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Capital takes back unused materials and decays them naturally in lead barrels. They then dispose of them fully decayed—a process that, for most of the materials, is completed in 60 hours.

It's because of the products' short half-life that Capital—which delivers all its products—needs to be in close proximity to its customers, most of which are within a one- to two-hour drive. Randy moved Capital to Delhi Township from Lansing in 2003 because of the good access to the interstate highways that Delhi offers.

Capital Pharmacy runs two shifts, operating from 11:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., and has 25 full and part-time employees.

The Coffee Barrel

ADDS FLAVOR TO HOLT

If you smell the tantalizing aroma of roasting coffee as you drive through downtown Holt, it's not your imagination—it's one of our newest local businesses, doing what they do best.

The Coffee Barrel is new to Holt, but it's celebrating 25 years of excellence in coffee, says owner Tim Brenner. He and his wife Shawn purchased the business from the original owner three years ago, and recently moved it from Okemos to its current location.

"Our mission is to help each customer find the perfect cup of coffee," says Tim, who sells premium coffees to individual consumers as well as to coffee shops. "The Coffee Barrel is ideal for the home user who wants to buy fresh-roasted gourmet coffee in bulk," Tim explains—with the emphasis on *fresh*. "The coffee literally goes directly from the roaster to the café," he says. "It's probably the freshest you can buy."

Coffees from 20 different countries and plantations are roasted in The Coffee Barrel's special one-of-a-kind roaster. "Our product is unsurpassed in quality, flavor and aroma," Tim says.

To help each customer find their perfect coffee, Tim and Shawn have a coffee bar in their retail showroom. Customers can buy a single cup of coffee or taste different varieties.

With 90 flavored coffees unique to The Coffee Barrel—all of them also available in decaffeinated—Tim is confident that his customers will find what they're looking for.

The company's standards have earned them a very loyal following over the years, Tim says, and he and Shawn strive to uphold those standards. They offer online ordering and daily UPS shipping to accommodate their customers, some of whom are as far away as Florida. They also encourage people to "friend" them on MySpace.

The Brennens have lived in Holt for nearly 15 years, and are looking forward to supporting the community and meeting even more of their neighbors.

The Coffee Barrel is at 2237 Aurelius Road, Holt, 694-9000, thecoffeebarrel.com.

"Our mission is to help each customer find the perfect cup of coffee," says Tim, who sells premium coffees to individual consumers as well as to coffee shops.



Two Men and a Truck



Mary Ellen Sheets, founder of Two Men and a Truck International, Inc., was a newly-single parent of three teens when her company was born.

It was the early 1980s, and Mary Ellen's sons, Brig and Jon, decided to start an after-school business. Armed only with muscle, the family's old pickup truck and their mother's hand-drawn "stick men" logo, they placed an ad in the *Town Courier* for moving services, \$25 an hour.

In time the sons left home, but the calls for moving services kept coming. So Mary Ellen bought a truck, hired two movers, and acted as salesperson, bookkeeper and marketing manager—all while working full time for the state.

She had no business plan, insurance or license and had never taken an accounting class. She was also painfully shy. Thus came what Mary Ellen calls her first lesson: "If you have to do something, do it repeatedly and you can get past your fear."

That first year, she made \$1,000 and gave it all away to charitable organizations. She has continued giving to those same organizations

every year since, and her second lesson, "Always give back to your community," has inspired her employees as well as franchisees to do the same.

Mary Ellen started her first franchise in Georgia with her daughter, Melanie, in 1987. As a single mom, Mary Ellen's financial goals had been to see her children through college, and "ensure they had good teeth and had an opportunity to see Europe." By 1988 she'd accomplished all that, so she quit her state job and devoted all her time to Two Men and a Truck. "I loved running this little business," she says. "Just loved it."

The lessons—and the successes—kept coming, and soon the little business wasn't little anymore.

Mary Ellen began recruiting for franchises and by 1991 had 10 stores. Today there are more than 200 in the U.S., Canada, Ireland and the UK. The company has been featured on *Oprah*, and in 2005, Mary Ellen was named the International Franchise Association's Entrepreneur of the Year—the only woman to win this award in its 40-year history. In 2008 the company was named to the *Wall Street Journal's* list of the top 25 franchises in the world, and also won a J. D. Power Award.

Two Men and a Truck now has 70 employees and a 38,000 square foot facility in Delhi Township, featuring a full-size two-story training house and a Plexiglas-sided training truck. During franchise training, students learn how to properly maneuver, wrap, pack and load virtually anything—from a grand piano to a china cabinet filled with breakables to a big-screen TV. Stick Men University also offers online classes in everything from marketing to making accurate estimates.

Two Men and a Truck has remained a family business. Mary Ellen, her daughter and sons are the company's officers and directors, and her son-in-law Noel—who designed the headquarters—is facilities manager. That family focus is the origin of what they call The Grandma Rule®—"To treat everyone the way you would want your grandma to be treated."

As Mary Ellen puts it, "Two Men and a Truck is not just a moving company—it's a customer service company that moves. It's our goal to exceed your expectations every time you interact with our team."

Two Men and a Truck International, Inc., is at 3400 Belle Chase Way, Lansing, 394-7210, twomenandatruck.com.

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THE DDA – WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) promotes economic development through business attraction/retention programs and works to foster investment within the DDA district. It strives to increase the Township's tax base and strengthen the local economy while maintaining those qualities that make Delhi Township a desirable place to live and work. For more information, visit us at www.DelhiDDA.com.

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