

BUSINESS

The Republican

FRIDAY, JULY 7, 2006

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NEWSMAKER

Coach Industries CEO indicted

Dow Jones/Associated Press

WASHINGTON - Coach Industries Group Inc. disclosed yesterday that the federal government indicted Chief Executive Francis O'Donnell, based on allegations of RICO conspiracy and other federal crimes. The Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act is a federal law that provides for extended penalties for criminal acts performed as part of an ongoing criminal organization.

Coach Industries, based in Cooper City, Fla., is a financial services and specialty insurance products holding company. It said in a document filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission that O'Donnell is also charged with conspiracy to commit extortion and money laundering.

Effective immediately, Coach Industries' board has appointed Steven Rothman as chairman of an interim executive management committee, the filing said.

The indictment filed by the federal government states that checks drawn in connection with the alleged money-laundering activities were drawn from six other companies, and not Coach Industries, according to the filing.

QUOTABLE

Saturn garage opens in Hadley

By WILLIAM FREEBAIRN
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HADLEY - Three former Saturn of Hadley employees have launched a garage to fill the void created when the dealership closed a month ago.

Route 9 Auto, a service station located on Russell Street, opened Wednesday.

"A lot of the clientele I've known for years, and I've watched them buy four or five cars," said Dee Scanlon, the former service manager of the Saturn dealership and president of Route 9 Auto. Saturn of Hadley, owned by Balise Motors, closed in June and customers were advised they could go to the Springfield Saturn dealership for sales and service.

Bryon Fuller, a service consultant, said he left Balise because he lives in Sunderland and found the commute to Springfield Saturn too long.

"It will be nice to just take care of the people around here who don't want to travel all that way," he said.

The third partner in the business is technician Phil Wajda, also a former Saturn of Hadley employee.

The three-bay garage is in a leased Sunoco gas station located on the Hadley-Amherst line on Route 9. The station had been closed for several months and will continue selling gasoline under the Sunoco brand, Scanlon said.

Signs promoting Route 9



Staff photo by MIEKE ZUIDERWEG

Bryon Fuller and Dee Scanlon, co-owners of Route 9 Auto at 457 Russell St., Hadley, stand next to a Saturn at their business yesterday. The third owner is Phil Wajda.

Auto went up on Wednesday, and customers were there right away, she said. "The word's getting around town," Scanlon said.

The small size of the facility may mean the business has to add evening hours or expand the number of bays, she said.

Saturn vehicles were particularly popular in Amherst, with an estimated 1,200 owners in

just that town, Scanlon said.

The Saturn line was launched by General Motors as a new brand that went head-to-head with popular imported vehicles. The no-haggle purchase policy and emphasis on quality drew a bevy of loyal buyers, Fuller said.

In recent years, a lack of new models drove sales down, he said, contributing to the decision to close dealerships nation-

wide. In the past year, Saturn has launched a variety of new models, with more expected this year, he said.

Route 9 Auto will focus on service to Saturns, although only Saturn dealers can provide warranty service. The garage will also repair other brands of cars, and it is seeking a permit to sell used cars.

Scanlon said she considers

herself a role model for young women considering a mechanical and technical career. As one of very few women auto mechanics and the owner of an automotive business, she has an important message, she said: "It's not a man's world."

Route 9 Auto will hold a formal grand opening celebration tomorrow with a barbecue, promotions and raffles.