



WEEK Ending September 8, 2006

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## INDUSTRY WATCH

### Airbus - Private

- [With a new leader taking reign, Airbus is in for some serious changes, reports Business Week.](#) Recent moves include the ousting of the plane maker's COO while promoting another executive to the post. But the shake-up wasn't unexpected as Airbus has had some snags in recent years. Assembly-line problems caused costly delays to Airbus' \$13 billion jet program, the A380. What else is in store for the European aircraft maker?
- [In related news, the Associated Press reports that Airbus' A380,](#) the world's largest passenger jet, took flight with a full load of passengers for the first time Monday.
- In other Airbus news, Reuters reports that [Airbus disagrees with negative statements from its 20% owner, BAE Systems, stating that the European aerospace producer remains on track.](#) BAE said that it was planning to sell its stake in the company to EADS, which owns the other 80% of Airbus and is the parent, for \$3.52 billion.

### Boeing – (NYSE:BA)

- After former Boeing executive Alan Mulally took route on a new set of wheels, [Boeing named Scott Carson as the new head of its airline division,](#) Associated Press reports. The move wasn't a surprise for the airline maker, who foresaw potential shifting as a result of executive changes made months ago. 60-year-old Carson is credited for his work in the turnaround of Boeing's commercial jet-making business.

### Ford – (NYSE:F)

- [Ford reported a 12% percent decline in U.S. sales in August, citing poor](#) truck sales and a stronger 2005 period, when deep discounts lured buyers into showrooms.
- The Associated Press reports that [Alan Mulally, Boeing executive, is named Ford's new CEO.](#) But his highly anticipated acceptance to lead the troubled auto giant wasn't granted with ease. At first, 61-year old Mulally, who is credited with getting Boeing Co.'s flight path back on track after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, resisted the offer, unwilling to leave a company he had served for 37 years. Ford, nonetheless, prevailed, naming their new chief with the right stuff to take Ford into a whole new direction.
- Time Magazine [also analyses Alan Mulally and Bill Ford's plans for the Ford Corporation.](#) (Article Search Required)

### Thermadyne – (OTC:THMD.PK)

- The St. Louis Business Journal reports that while [Thermadyne Holdings reported in preliminary results 7% growth in revenue for the second quarter,](#) the company expects a loss of \$5.8 million, compared with a loss of \$936,000 a year ago. CEO Paul Melnik cites strong demand during the second quarter, particularly for Thermadyne's gas equipment, arc accessories and plasma lines.



**Toyota – (NYSE:TM) / General Motors - (NYSE:GM)**

- The Associated Press reports on the increased consumer demand of automobiles, particularly more fuel-efficient offerings. Toyota reported a 17% increase for August sales, while GM sales increased 3.9% from a year ago.

**FINANCIAL WATCH**

**“Liquid Gold” Discovered in the Gulf**

- The Associated Press reports that a new oil field was found in the Gulf of Mexico that could boost the nation's reserves by more than 50%. Chevron Corp., who made the discovery, believes the 300-square-mile region where the oil is located could hold between 3 billion and 15 billion barrels of oil and natural gas liquids. But analysts proclaim that the deposit won't make a big dent in the country's dependence on foreign oil or lower prices at the pump anytime soon.

**Aerospace Industry Stands Strong in California** (Article Search Required)

- After several setbacks and dark predictions for Southern California's aerospace industry, the LA Times reports that the area still stands strong against the tide of change. The bad news came like a tidal wave. First, changes reported at Boeing could potentially cause the loss or reclassification of about 6,000 jobs. Then, Lockheed Martin won an \$8.1 billion contract over Northrop Grumman to build NASA's next-generation spacecraft, which will shift the work from California to Texas. But executives and analysts say that the aerospace industry will continue to grow. "It will just look different." While major manufacturers have left the sunny coast, thousands of suppliers remain and are profiting from a commercial aircraft precision parts business that has suddenly taken a turn for the better.

**Transportation in High Gear in Busy Maine**

- The Boston Globe reports that Maine's governor plans to expand commuter rail services northward to the state's interior and coastal communities in an effort to relieve congestion caused by Maine's increasingly popular rail system and busy highways. Governor John Baldacci's order also demands clearer economic development plans near train stations along the existing route of the Downeaster, which connects Boston's North Station and Portland, Maine. "Every month the Downeaster is breaking new ridership records," Baldacci said. "We've made the trains faster and better... It's time to head north."

**Commodity Prices Show Signs of Easing**

- The Financial Times reports that the booming prices of aluminum and copper over the last three years may finally come to an end. The International Monetary Fund warned that prices for precious metals have reached their peak, resulting in sharp price declines by the end of the decade. While the rocketing commodity prices have lifted economies in nations that are rich with resources, such as the Middle East, South America, Africa, Canada and Australia, they have taken a toll on consuming countries in North America, Europe and Asia. But the relief of prices is still far off, as metal prices are currently "fairly valued," according to the Fund.

**INNOVATION WATCH**

**Engineers Extend Life of Ball Bearings**

- EngineerLive! reports on new technology developed to increase the life expectancy of ball bearings. With early stage bearing failures costing millions, not to mention lost time, bearing manufacturers are continually seeking ways to increase the life expectancy of their products and in some cases double it. One such product that has been in the limelight recently is a spherical roller bearing with vibrating screens. Thanks to recent developments, these bearings can run twice as long as its conventional bearing counterparts.



**Tokyo Auto Show Unveils Future of Transportation**

- [Popular Science features a portfolio of futuristic automobiles and motorcycles from one of the most widely attended conferences in the industry, the Tokyo auto show.](#) Boasting features such as animal cages and spacey rooftop doors, these automobiles are anything but standard.

**CAREER WATCH**

**Welding Hot in Montana**

- [The Billings Gazette reports that demand for welders is rising in Montana.](#) As welding job offers mount for students at the University of Montana-Helena College of Technology, class size is finally starting to increase thanks to a recent boom in the field due to soaring industrial production across the globe. And in many cases, companies starving for welders are tapping teachers early in the school year to request that students join their team for on-site after hours training.

**And in Wisconsin Too**

- [The Janesville Gazette reports on the booming local job scene,](#) especially for welders, in Wisconsin, despite the overall decline of manufacturing in some areas. What's in store for the area? Some say the increasing need for skilled workers point to an increasingly difficult situation for employers. But either way you look at it, the picture is certainly rosy for those who want work.

**PEOPLE WATCH**

**Hand-built Motorcycle Steals the Show**

- [A welder's work took center stage in a hometown parade, the Waynesville Daily Guide reports.](#) While the usual attractions, such as politicians, fair queen candidates, military personnel and antique cars, made their debut, this year's main attraction was a hand-built three-wheel motorcycle that was pieced together from old materials.

**Doing a "Man's Job" Can Mean Big Payoff**

- [The Beaumont Enterprise showcases a woman who is just one of the boys.](#) This 27-year-old woman, a passionate welder at Way Fabricators, has found solace in a field comprised significantly of men. But she loves to weld and wants to advance toward a job in inspection possibly. Her tip to women who want to do a "man's job": be good, be fast, and be twice as accurate as any man.

**"Father of Robotics" Reminisces While Focusing on Tomorrow**

- The [Fairfield County Business Journal sits with Joseph Engelberger, named "the father of robotics". His life has led him to amazing triumphs and harsh disappointments, but he persevered as one of the most respected men in history.](#) Here Engelberger remembers his journey, the passage that led him to greatness, but even greatness has its downside. Now his focus is for a better tomorrow.

**Shepherd Wagons Make a Comeback Thanks to Creative Welder**

- [A 37-year-old welder with a creative streak has carved out a niche in the "mobile-home" business, refurbishing old shepherd wagons that offer both nostalgia and practical uses, according to the Billings Gazette.](#) The wagons are collector's items or even temporary homes, and sell in the range of \$3,000 to \$30,000, depending on the wagon's detail and hours required for restoration.



## **SAFETY WATCH**

### **Scientists Link Manganese Exposure with Neurological Symptoms in Animals**

- [After much deliberation about whether or not there is a link between manganese and Parkinson's disease, the Science Daily](#) reports that researchers from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Thomas Jefferson University have discovered a potential explanation for the occurrence of neurological symptoms in animals in association with manganese exposure.

## **AWS IN THE PRESS**

### **AWS Section 9 Outstanding Instructor of the Year Recognized**

- The winner of [AWS Section 9's Outstanding Instructor of the Year Award was featured in the South Mississippi Sun-Sentinel](#). William Harris, welding instructor at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Jackson County campus, was presented with the Howard E. Adkins Outstanding Instructor award, which is given annually to recognize instructors whose teaching skills and activities are considered to have advanced the science and art of welding instruction. According to the report, Harris was the first welding instructor in the district to be certified by the AWS as a Certified Welding Inspector and Certified Welding Educator in all secondary and post-secondary educational institutions. He also was the first instructor in the district to use computer-based software for welding education.