

Letters

Funny money – depreciation of the dollar

Editor:
Everyone knows that the dollar tends to depreciate over time. Sometimes, we forget just how much.

At the turn of the century, a "top hand" was paid a dollar a day. At the beginning of World War II, many were earning seven times that amount. Today, the minimum wage yields almost five dollars in an hour!

The value of a dollar is always calculated with reference to something else. Commonly, it is compared to a "basket of commodities" which we call the Consumer Price Index. Once it was compared to an ounce of gold or silver. Today, it is frequently compared to the value of a foreign currency.

However it is calculated, the answers are radically different. According to the Consumers' Price Index, the dollar averages an annual depreciation somewhere between 3 and 5%. The "gold dollar" has depreciated substan-

tially. In the 1920's it was worth \$20/ounce. President Roosevelt changed this to \$35/ounce. Today it is close to \$400/ounce. Relative to foreign currencies, according to the Wall St. Journal (5/31/95), in the last year, the dollar is up 86.54% against the Mexican peso, down 1.11% against the Canadian dollar, down 5.97% against the British pound, down 20.71% against the Japanese Yen, down 19.18% against the Swiss franc and off 16.23% against the German Deutschmark.

All of the evidence seems to indicate that the dollar is in a long-term downtrend which is likely to continue. Obviously, it is not a prudent place to put one's savings. "Gold Bugs" believe that gold is the only safe place to put one's money. But, in the past year, gold hasn't appreciated at much as say the Swiss Franc (which is backed by gold (40%). "Hot Shot Investors" claim the stock market is the best place to

invest—pointing to the long-term uptrend of around 10% annually. Mutual funds have become the rage of the mid-90's. However, last year, most of the mutual funds did nothing.

One thing seems fairly sure, in the past year, the average bank account has not been the best place to save money. Interest has barely kept up with inflation (as measured by the CPI). However, the knowledgeable saver may deposit his money more wisely.

In St. Louis, the Mark Twain Bank will maintain your account or offer CD's nominated in such foreign currencies as Swiss francs, German marks, Canadian dollars or Japanese yen. If you haven't heard of this bank, given 'em a call at 1-800-926-4922. Based on last year's dollar depreciation, the returns look interesting!

Hugh P. King
Dallas

The circus isn't fun for animal performers

Editor:
Circuses are no more a great American tradition than the side show "freaks" once exploited by P.T. Barnum.

Elephants are routinely beaten, starved, chained by two or more legs and tormented till their spirits are broken. Weapons used include bullhooks, stun guns, whips, electric prods, etc. They travel in dark, dirty, fly-infested, foul smelling boxcars for days at a time enduring baking hot to freezing cold temperatures, denied fresh air and sunshine, forced to perform abnormal and painful acts in spite of foot rot (from standing in feces and urine) and injuries, denied every freedom of a natural life.

Driven mad in captivity, a Hawthorn Circus elephant ripped through an arena wall in Altoona, PA on April 21, 1993, causing \$10,000 worth of damage. A few weeks ago several elephants from the Clyde Beatty Cole Brothers Circus went on a rampage, damaging cars and crashing through two plate glass windows at the Hanover Mall in Hanover, PA.

The greasepaint merriment mask cruelties endured by the sad-eyed fearful elephants. The media, won over with "circus hype" covers the events as fun and frolic, when in reality its animal abuse is taken to the extremes.

Tigers, when not confined in small cages, are chained to their pedestals with ropes around their

necks to choke them into learning tricks. Horses and ponies are routinely injured in traveling and performing; bears suffer from brutal training methods, constant confinement, loneliness and extreme hot temperatures.

Only a sensitive and enlightened public will stop the exploitation of circus animals, victims of human greed! Circuses featuring exotic animal acts are banned in Hollywood, Florida, Toronto, Vancouver, British Columbia, Finland, England, Switzerland, Sweden and Denmark. They realize that human talent is dazzle enough.

Colette R. Devine
Dallas

Seeks information on area Durland family

Editor:
A call for help from fellow genealogists! As a family genealogist on surname Durland, I'm at a stalemate! Living in VA and lack of early record keeping in Pennsylvania is the culprit!

I'm searching for an obit and/or marriage record for James E. Durland, 1820-1891, married second to Mary Ann Goodrich after 1862 but by 1865.

James married first to Adeline Smith in Wyoming County, parents of Denton DeWitt Durland. After Adeline's death, he married Mary Ann Goodrich, parents of Archie Durland and Adeline Dur-

land Wilson. James and Mary Ann lived in Demunds, Dallas Twp., Luzerne County, PA. James buried in Centerville, day and month of death unknown. Mary Ann died April 23, 1901, burial place unknown.

A reprint from the Wyoming Democrat, 1872, in Wyoming County's Historical Society publication, "Lest We Forget", had news of a family reunion for Margaret Smith (Adeline's mother). It stated Adeline was deceased, and in naming those present said, Denton DeWitt Durland, only son of James and Adeline and a son by a second marriage".

I could find no will for James at Luzerne County courthouse, no obit for James in Wilkes-Barre Record, or death record or obit for Mary Ann.

James and Mary Ann Goodrich Durland are my great grandparents. I know my information is correct, but, as a genealogist I need proof of that marriage!

Anyone out there in the Dallas area have any information to help me? Would really appreciate hearing from you.

Rose A. Vosler,
4725 Bunker Hill LA,
Virginia Beach, VA 23462-2521.

Library news

Pogs and slammers collection visits library

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The display case at the Back Mountain Memorial Library is featuring a collection of 'POGS' borrowed from Thomas Hogan of Plymouth. Thomas is 11 years old and attends Main Street Elementary School in the Valley West District. He will be in sixth grade next year. He is the grandson of Mary Lou Swingle of Shavertown. Thomas has over 800 pogs in his possession. These are the latest fad of collectible items and can be purchased at card shops or toy departments. The display case has pogs used to spell out the word, POGS and various types of pogs spread out in addition. There are piles of pogs and special slammers in the display.

The players put five or six pogs in a pile, then hit them with the slammer and take any that flip over. There are various size cases for pogs, some up to five feet long. There are cut-out pogs, shiny pogs, blade pogs, and non-shiny pogs; also state pogs, poison pogs, and 8 ball pogs. The slammers include torpedo, California clippers, Steamrollers, stinkers and pounders. This different kind of display will be at the library until June 28.

We have been featuring some young people's artistry and writing on the bulletin board in the library. The newest addition to the board is a drawing of a grandmother and a granddaughter with a special story attached called, "When I Grow Up!". The story goes: When I grow up I am going to be a librarian. It will be fun. I like books very much. I can bring books to my grandchildren and I like to help people. Now I help in my grandmother's library. It is

fun to help in her library! By Elizabeth. At the bottom of the story, she has pasted a sticker of sunglasses with the word "dazzling" printed on it. Needless to say, this Elizabeth is my eight year old granddaughter, and she does love our library.

New books at the library: "In the Tennessee Country" by Peter Taylor is a subtle, civilized, evocative story about a Tennessee-bred man's obsession with recovering a vanished cousin and understanding the nature of his disappearance. Exploring crossroads in life.

"Haywire" by James Mills is a novel that races between conti-

nents, a tale of betrayal, money and a world gone Haywire. Douglas Fleming is a former DEA agent and the envy of his friends. His 9 year old son disappears with \$100 million in bonds and the search begins.

"Redemption" by Leon Uris continues the epic story of the Irish struggle for freedom. Set against the dramatic backdrop of increased unrest in Ireland and a world about to be pitched headlong into the nightmare of the First World War, it weaves together unforgettable characters. The story takes us from the frontier of New Zealand to the shipyards of Belfast.



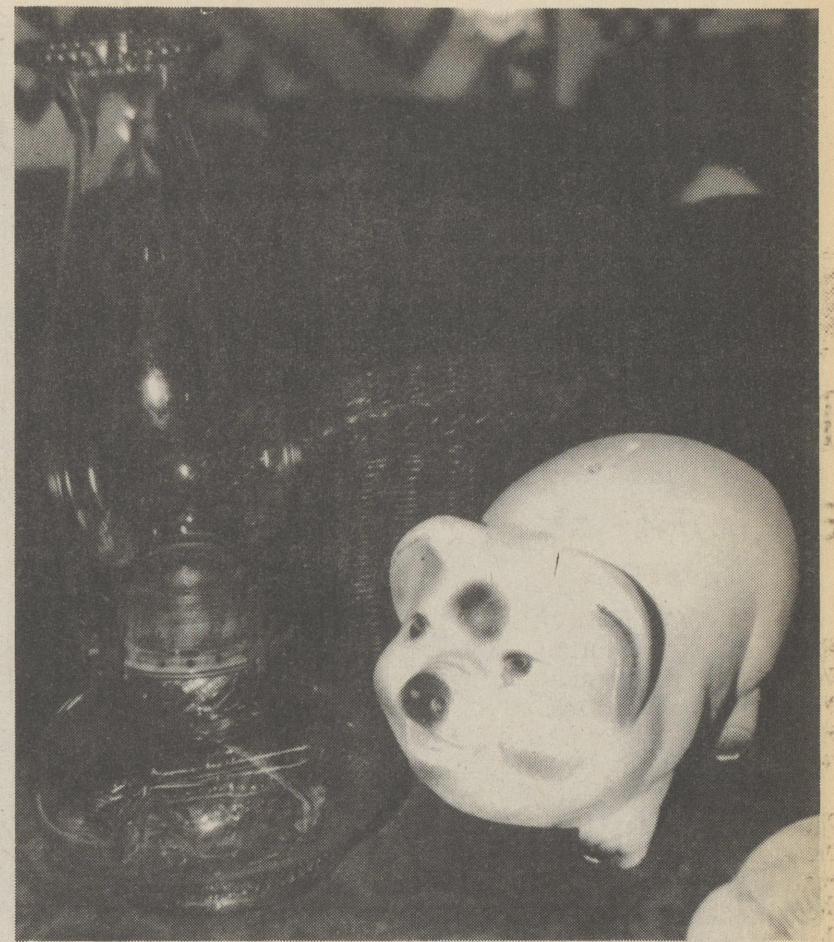
Jingle dancer

Young Carrie Dowby, a Seneca jingle dancer, danced at the powwow held last weekend at Hanson's campground at Harveys Lake. Carrie wears large, shiny tin cones, which make a tinkling noise as she moves, on her regalia.

POST PHOTO/GRACE R. DOVE

Library Auction Corner

An antique piggy bank and hurricane lamp are among the items that will be sold over the block at the Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction July 6-9. Other antique items include a Wallace Nutting colored photo in pink and green tones, an etched coal top table with a furniture base, a one drawer cherry table, two large brass Stiffel lamps and much more.



For 49 summers, the people of the Back Mountain have come together to donate their goods, services and time to the auction block of the Back Mountain Memorial Library.

The life of the library is a year-to-year proposition, and the auction is crucial to its operation. Twenty-five percent of the annual budget comes from the auction.

This year's 49th annual auction will be held July 6-9 at the library grounds on Huntsville Road in Dallas.

Any and all donations of cash or saleable items can help assure the continued fine service of the library to our communities. For more information, call the library at 675-1182.



July 6-7-8-9

Support the Back Mountain Library

One-fourth of the library's annual budget comes from the auction. You can help. Your donation of an item or money will help your library survive and prosper.

Here's my donation to the Back Mountain Memorial Library

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City/State _____ Zip _____

I have an item to donate. Call me for details.

Here's a cash donation of \$ _____ to help the library.

Mail or bring to: Back Mountain Memorial Library
96 Huntsville Road, Dallas PA 18612

Call 675-1182 if you have any questions. Donations are tax-deductible.

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