

UNITED CONSULTING

in the **A-T-L**

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"We're here for you"

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The Importance of Giving Back

by Robyn Abree

*"We make a living by what we get,
but we make a life by what we give."*
~Winston Churchill

Despite the economic downturn, giving back should still be a top priority to all companies. Practicing good philanthropy not only benefits the community, but also boosts sales and creates better morale and productivity amongst employees. When done right, giving back generates good business.

Top enterprises like Ben and Jerry's, Microsoft and Starbucks demonstrate that donating goods and services comes full circle. Ben and Jerry's mission statement,



"commitment to incorporating wholesome, natural ingredients and promoting business practices that respect the Earth and Environment" goes in line with their efforts to minimize waste and maintain safe food production standards. The result: a delicious and wholesome product customers consistently enjoy.

Microsoft donates money to various nonprofit organizations and provides software, training, business opportunities and technological advancements to numerous countries around the globe. This international expansion has both benefited places in need as well as boosted promotion and sales of their products.

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Killer Foods

by Kim Page

You may have eaten a grape or two, maybe even a strawberry without washing it first. You've thought to yourself "it won't kill me", but after reading the article "5 Dirtiest Foods You're Eating", courtesy of AOL Health, you might reconsider.

Eggs: While you really never hear of anyone becoming ill from eggs, the risk is still out there. It's estimated that nearly 2 million eggs in circulation a year are contaminated with Salmonella, sickening more than 650,000 people and killing as many

as 300. How can you protect yourself? Make sure that you buy eggs that are pasteurized and do not have cracks or leaks. Also, keep your eggs stored in the coldest part of your re

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Beauty School Dropout, Go Back to College

by Avid Lajevardi

The economic downturn has people withdrawing from banks and applying to college. Harvard received 29,000 applications for fall 2009 and the University of Georgia received almost 16,000 and only accepted 9,000. Steadily increasing tuition fees makes this seem unlikely, but while tuition and expenses are on the rise, a college degree, better yet, a post-graduate degree, will ensure higher income.

According the US Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2002, women with a high

school diploma or less, earned \$323 a week compared to women with a college degree who earned \$809 weekly. Men with a high school diploma or less, had earnings of \$421 per week in comparison with \$1,089 per week for college graduates.

Higher application rates in colleges are also attributed to the ability of a fam-



ily to pay for college. Studies have shown that households headed by college graduates made significantly more money than those headed by a high school graduate. Additionally, people with a college degree are more likely to live in a two-parent household and to have their spouse in a well-paying job. All of this equates to a greater standard of living for the generations to come.

The Importance of Giving Back

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Starbucks gives back by providing health and stock benefits for its employees. Also, the company practices environmental responsibility by using drink sleeves made of 10% post-consumer product and selling Ethos Water, which fundraisers to provide clean drinking water to children in need. In return for demonstrating corporate responsibility, Starbucks has earned a humble reputation amongst their customers and stands as one of the leading food companies in the world.

During tough economic times, companies may be tempted to curtail giving, but they shouldn't forgo all humanitarian efforts. Corporations who want to give back without sacrificing profit should choose causes carefully and only support

businesses that have close ties to their own. Once a business chooses a cause, it should research various non-profits and pick an organization that best suits the company's ideals. Susan Hyatt, philanthropy consultant and founder of Business Nonprofit Connections said, "There is a way to be strategic and get business value out of your giving and still do it in an authentic way."

If a company wishes to improve visibility, Hyatt suggests choosing a small group where your company can be the major benefactor. And if a company wants to increase sales, she said asking the about nonprofit's other patrons could be a good way to meet possible clients.

Stacey Wedding, a principal at Henderson Consultants Professionals in Philanthropy, advises businesses to heavily research and budget before signing on board with a new charity. He also suggests talking to other businesses affiliated with the non-profit group and getting feedback from their experiences.

To reduce haphazard donations during the economic recession, Wedding warns against "checkbook charity" or simply writing checks for support. Likewise, Amy Choi, a columnist for Businessweek magazine, suggests that companies offer skills instead of money. For example, a business can partner with a nonprofit organization and allow the use of conference rooms or volunteers a few times a week.

Memories Never Fade. Or Do They?

by Avid Lajevardi

Studies have shown that bad memories last longer in our minds than pleasant ones. But what if we could make the bad ones not so scary?

A group of Dutch researchers have uncovered a new use for the high blood pressure medication, propranolol. Sixty patients were shown pictures of spiders while simultaneously given a mild shock,

creating a fearful memory. Twenty four hours later half of the group was given the beta-blocker, propranolol, and half were given a placebo. When shown the pictures again, the test group had significantly less fear, as assessed by eye blink reactions. Repeat viewing of the photos with minimal fear response, deemed the results permanent.

Some scientists believe the findings can benefit research directed towards managing post traumatic stress disorder as well as many other emotional disorders. However, some believe the beta blocker is a dangerous method of altering a person's identity. Afterall, much of our personality stems from our memories.

In Search of a Rainbow (Not to Mention the Pot of Gold) in the Aftermath of the Rain of Money

by Govind Hariharan, Ph.D.

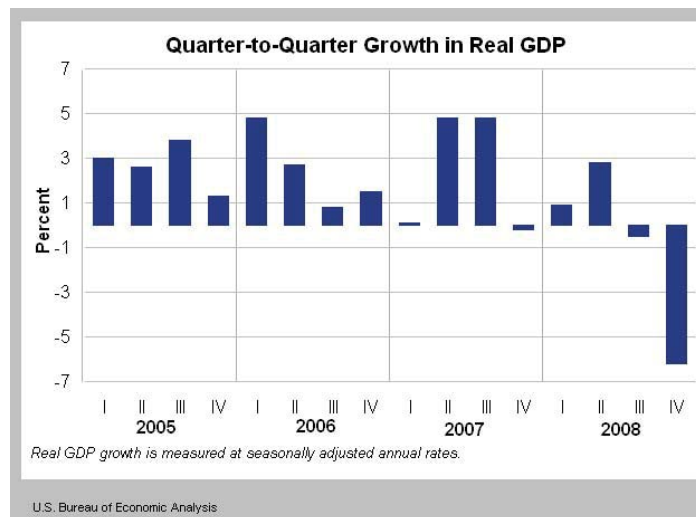
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Real Gross Domestic Product in the U.S. declined 6.2 % in the fourth quarter of 2008 following a 0.4% decline in the third quarter. Declines in everything from exports to consumer spending to business investment and housing contributed to this. In January of 2009, there were 2,227 mass layoff events (manufacturing accounted for 38%) and it resulted in over a quarter million additional unemployed. Forecasts of the economy expect a long and arduous road to recovery and as part of its “speedy approach” to kick starting the economy, the federal government has embarked on a historical spending spree with the stated purpose of generating millions of new jobs, stimulating the economy and setting up the foundations for the future prosperity of our economy. This is but the beginning and “Stimulus Bill Part II” is expected by most to be a foregone conclusion. “Once again, fiscal responsibility has taken a back seat to a partisan, big-government vision”, noted Rep. Tom Price recently. His concern is shared by many as shown by a Washington Post-

ABC News poll conducted a week ago, in which 59% of Americans are “very concerned” about the size of the federal budget deficit. If we want to increase consumer spending we cannot have worried consumers.



The problem is that, instead of a bloated stimulus bill, fundamental problems in the economy need to be addressed in order for our rainbow to appear. These are centered around problems in credit, housing and manufacturing. In spite of the credit provided to financial institutions, the tightness of credit continues to affect every aspect of our economy. Realization is finally creeping in that isolating the toxic assets is an unavoidable action. Foreclosure rates continue to climb and housing values con-

tinue to plummet. According to RealtyTrac 274,000 new foreclosure filings occurred in January of 2009. Stopping the housing melt down might require (in addition to increased lending, and confidence) incentives to boost demand such as the Isakson amendment that was unfortunately evicted from the final Recovery Act. The auto bailout while it might keep some people employed is not the type of boost in manufacturing employment that is sustainable. A more viable and effective approach may have been to provide support to Ford to purchase the sound elements of GM and Chrysler and become a stronger competitor in world markets. Oh, I forgot, Ford is doing well by itself and does not want the bailout money! They do not want the pot of gold at the end of a rainbow for it is but a figment of our imagination.

Friday the 13th

by Avid Lajevardi



2009 will host three Fridays that fall on the 13th in February, March, and November. A rare occurrence that happens only every eleven years.

In celebration of this abnormal event, here are some points to ponder about the infamous day:

1. Although they adamantly deny it, the British Navy supposedly built a ship named Friday the 13th and on its maiden voyage, which was also on Friday the 13th, it took sail and was never to be heard from again. The Royal Navy museum insists this is a mere legend and that no ship has ever been named for any day of the week.
2. The Apollo 13 shuttle launched at 13:13 CST on April 11, 1970 and exploded on April 13, which was not on a Friday. However, the digits of the launch date add up the 13 (4+1+1+7+0=13).
3. Check your high rise. Is there a 13th floor? Many buildings skip this floor and many hospitals have no room #13.
4. One of the most popular myths in science, fear of Friday the 13th, is referred to as paraskavedekatria-phobia or friggatriskaidekaphobia. Fear of the number 13 is called triskaidekaphobia.
5. Dan Marino, arguably one of the best quarterbacks of all time, wore the #13 for his entire career with the Miami Dolphins, yet never won a Superbowl.
6. The notorious American train and bank robber, Butch Cassidy, was born on Friday, April 13, 1866.
7. Former President of Cuba, Fidel Castro, was born on Friday, August 13, 1926.
8. 32nd President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt, refused to travel on the 13th day of the month and he never hosted 13 guests at a meal. Napoleon Bonaparte and Herbert Hoover shared the fear of the number 13.
9. Parisian diners can hire a professional 14th dinner guest, called a quatorzieme.
10. After being warned not to attend, Mark Twain commented on the meal where he was the 13th dinner guest: "It was bad luck. They only had food for 12."
11. 28th President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, considered 13 his luck number. However, his record proves otherwise. He left for Normandy, France on Friday, December 13, 1918 to draft a treaty with warring foreign nations that Congress refused to sign.
12. Numerologists believe that 13 suffers from its position after 12 which is a complete number. There are 12 months in a year, 12 signs of the Zodiac, 12 Gods of Olympus, 12 tribes of Israel, 12 Apostles of Jesus and 12 days of Christmas.
13. The seals on the back of a dollar bill include 13 stars above the eagle's head, 13 leaves on the olive branch and 13 war arrows in the eagle's claw.

If Barbie Were Real

by Kim Page

With Barbie celebrating her 50th birthday on March 9th, it made me wonder what would a real life Barbie look like? I hit the internet and did some research and my findings weren't so pretty shall we say.

While Barbie is 'perfect,' her real life perfection wouldn't allow her to last very long. In keeping with true Barbie proportions, her head would be the

same circumference as her waist, causing her to have room for only half a liver and a few inches of intestines, instead of the

	Average Women	Barbie
Height	5'4"	7'2"
Weight	140 lbs.	101 lbs.
Dress Size	14	4
Bust	36" - 37" & B cup	39" & FF cup
Waist	30" - 34"	19" (same as head)
Hips	40" - 42"	33"
Shoe Size	8 ½ - 9 ½	5

standard 26 feet, resulting in chronic diarrhea and death from malabsorption & malnutrition.

Because Barbie's neck is twice as long as the average human's, it would be impossible for her to support her head. Her legs are 50 percent longer than her

arms where the average woman's legs are only 20 percent longer than her arms. Additionally, Barbie's feet are so disproportionately small, her chest would pull her forward, forcing her to walk on all fours...poor Barbie.

To 'be' Barbie, a woman would need to add 61 cm to her height, subtract 15 cm from her waist, add 13 cm to her chest, and lengthen her neck by 8 cm.

What is April Fool's Day?

by Avid Lajevardi

Valentine's Day is for love and St. Patrick's is for love of the Irish, but what is April Fool's Day?

One theory says, beginning in the Middle Ages, a silly spurt of practical jokes coincided with the coming of Spring. Ancient Romans and Celts celebrated with a festival of mischief making called All Fool's Day.

Another explanation traces back to Roman mythology, to the story of Ceres, Goddess of the Harvest, her daughter, Proserpina, and Pluto, God of the Dead. Pluto kidnapped Proserpina and took her to live with him in the underworld. Proserpina called out for her mother, but Ceres could only hear an echo of Proserpina's voice and Ceres searched for her in vain. Called a "fool's errand," or a wild goose chase, anecdotes such as this one, ran rampant throughout Europe.

The most popular theory of the origin of April Fool's Day is the transition from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar in the late 16th century. The

Julian calendar recognized the New Year during the week of March 25 to April 1, but the Gregorian calendar shifted New Year's to January 1. Many did not get the message or refused to switch to the new calendar and were the subject of many jokes during the old New Year.

Regardless of the history, April Fool's Day is celebrated around the world. Long ago in France, pranksters used to stick dead fish on the back of anyone who celebrated the old New Year's, earning them the term of Poisson d'Avril, or April Fish. Scotland is the source of the first "Kick Me" sign, worn during observance of old New Year's and Scottish jokes are referred to as April "Gowks," which is another name for the cuckoo bird.

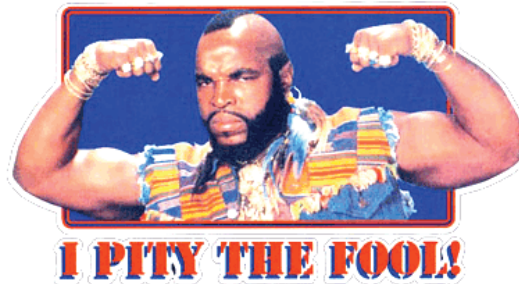
One of the most famous pranks of all time is the 1957 BBC document of the

great spaghetti harvest in Switzerland. The BBC documentary showed families picking strands of pasta from their "spaghetti trees." Because pasta was still a delicacy in Britain, many people fooled by the broadcast inquired about how to obtain a "spaghetti tree" of their own.

But don't think the Europeans are the only tricky ones. On April Fool's Day in 2007, Google

duped users when they announced a new Gmail Paper Service. The "service" provided gmail users with the option to request that their emails be printed out and mailed for free.

This year, Google plans to put all pranks aside and is looking for anyone interested in participating in their Mars Exploration Project...



Killer Foods

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refrigerator, usually in the back, in their carton.

Pre-Packed Salad Mixes: Don't let the "Triple Washed" sticker fool you. Back in 2002 – 2003, there was an E. coli outbreak that sickened 36 people in San Diego and 29 in Washington all due to tainted prepackaged lettuce.

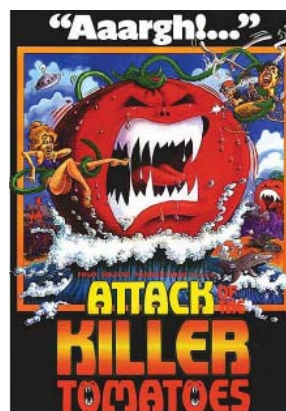
Just because it claims to have been washed doesn't mean it's pathogen free. Give that "Triple Wash" lettuce one more washing just to be on the safe side.

Peaches: Apparently it takes a lot of toxic pesticides to be "pretty as a peach". Just weeks before harvesting, peaches are coated typically with 9 different pesticides to prevent blemishes and bruises.

Because most produce has a natural wax covering, experts suggest washing your produce with a sponge or scrub brush with a drop of dishwashing detergent.

Scallions: Just last year, a major hepatitis A outbreak affected several states, including Georgia. This garnish is used on many restaurant plates and is a carrier of parasites like *Cryptosporidium*, *Shigella* and *Salmonella*...ewww!

Experts suggest purchasing refrigerated scallions. Room-temperature scallions are breeding grounds for bacteria. And of course, make sure that you prop-



erly wash the scallions and remove the outer sheath to kill lingering microorganisms.

Melons: These delicious fruits are grown on the ground and have a netted exterior so it's easy for salmonella to creep up. Your best bet: Scrub the melons with a brush and mild dish soap and warm water before slicing.

So before you start preparing your next meal, keep an eye out for these "killer foods" and follow the proper safety precautions to keep sicknesses and disease at bay!



We're here for you

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Rapunzel Rapunzel. . .

by Patty Carr

Question: Did Pittsburgh Steelers' Troy Polamalu make a splash on the football scene because he's fast? Is a great tackle? Is really smart?

Answer: None of the above.

For the casual football spectator, Polamalu is most identifiable for his Samsonesque hair. However, his flowing locks don't stand a chance if the Kansas City Chiefs have their way.

The Chiefs have proposed a rule that will be debated and voted on at the NFL's annual meeting. The rule would ban players from having long hair that interferes with playing or can cover the back of the player's jersey. Consequently, players with long hair would have to either cover up or cut their locks.

Should this rule pass, it would affect players such as Pittsburgh safety Polamalu and Jacksonville cornerback Rashean Mathis.



When Kansas City played Pittsburgh in October 2006, Chief's running back Larry Johnson pulled Polamalu down from behind grabbing a hold of his hair. Since that incident, the Chiefs believe that longer hair is a uniform violation and should be regulated. Other teams agree, and believe that long hair is also a safety violation.

There isn't much evidence that says longer hair is a safety issue but as Polamalu discovered, dangling hair can be to your rival's advantage. It's possible he would have made a touchdown if he had been sporting a buzz.

Perhaps Polamalu should look to Johnny Unitas for inspiration— now that's a haircut!

