



...weekly since 1976

Your guide to understanding
today's economy and
financial markets

June 20, 2007

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Shrek the Third

Written by Jeff Thredgold, CSP, President, Thredgold Economic Associates

One of the painful realities of life as an economist and professional speaker is that the subject matter of economics is typically viewed (with good reason!) by the general public as confusing, intimidating, and boring. As a result, trying to present weekly economic and financial information with an unusual twist can occasionally be a most welcome change.

Warning!! This week's *Tea Leaf* is my semi-annual economic, financial, and political update... using today's current movie titles. My sincere apology in advance to anyone I might offend.

**In next week's
Tea Leaf:**

The nationwide release of our new book, ***econAmerica***, published by Wiley & Sons

The Housing Bubble

Thousands of American "investors" have that **SICKO** feeling in their tummies, tied to their former **PREMONITION**s that home prices would move higher and higher for ever and ever. These former **WILD HOGS** now seek help from **EVAN ALMIGHTY** to purge their **BLACK BOOK**s of sizable losses. Greed is not one of our more attractive emotions.

The Stock Market

Stock investors stay fixated by a Dow Average that moves down **300** points over a few days, only to move up a similar amount over the next few days. Even so, the Dow has been **KNOCKED UP** more than **1408** points above the 12000 level first reached last October.

Numerous market bears see stock prices that have practically moved into **ORBIT**. On the other hand, we continue to see the stock market as attractive and perhaps even undervalued.



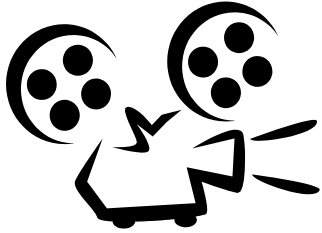
The War on Terror

Valiant Iraqi, American, and coalition troops continue to support a mantra of **LIVE FREE OR DIE HARD** in Iraq. One hopes that this senseless reality of **YOU KILL ME** or I will you might someday give way to greater respect for different views of religion and life. One also hopes that **THE INVISIBLE** Osama bin Laden soon becomes just another **SPIDER-MAN**, as was Saddam Hussein when pulled from hiding in a filthy hole earlier in the War.

Too many **GHOST RIDERS** have resulted from this insanity. Perhaps the **NEXT** set of leaders will promote the view of **ARE WE DONE YET?** with the violence and embrace greater dialogue wherever possible.

A Summer Romance

Many American men, including **MR. BROOKS** and would-be Romeos of all shapes and sizes, seek to enjoy the spoils of summer, with **EVENING**s spent **IN THE LAND OF WOMEN**. Meanwhile, many American women, including **MISS POTTER, NANCY DREW, GRACIE**, and even some **LONELY HEARTS** seek the **CRAZY LOVE** that sometimes defines a summer romance.



Those most fortunate might find **A MIGHTY HEART** wherein a **LICENSE TO WED** is desired. Others will seek the **RESCUE DAWN** to keep the **BLACK SHEEP** and **FIREHOUSE DOGS** clearly **AWAY FROM HER**.

A Summer Adventure

Younger vacationers may soon note that **SURF'S UP** and will party hearty, acknowledging that school begins a mere **28 DAYS LATER**. Those inclined to actions of **DISTURBIA** in public—tied to imbibing way too many **SHOOTERS** and other alcoholic concoctions—will seek to avoid the **HOT FUZZ** and other peacekeepers and subsequent inebriated conversations in **BROKEN ENGLISH**.

Those of greater means will at **ONCE** be off to **PARIS**, dealing with **THE VALET**s and **WAITRESS**es employed by world-class hotels and eateries. The most adventurous vacationers will seek the **BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA** to taste **RATATOUILLE**, noting that the most memorable of human challenges are found **AT WORLD'S END**.

The Election Season

Presidential candidates exceeding an **OCEAN'S THIRTEEN** in number will vie to be **THE LAST MIMZY** standing. These candidates will continually study a **DAY WATCH** of voter preference polls to see if their campaigns to fill an upcoming White House **VACANCY** remain **DEAD OR ALIVE**.

While all claim to be the **TRANSFORMERS** they loudly espouse, some fear they might be **CONDEMNED** to the lesser positions of the **FANTASTIC FOUR** finalists, those eventually considered for only the Vice Presidential spot on the tickets. To some of these statuesque egos, such a position is worse than **DEATH AT A FUNERAL**.

“TEA”ser

Strength is the capacity to break a chocolate bar into four pieces with your hands...and then eat just one of the pieces.

—Judith Viorst

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