



...weekly since 1976

*Your guide to understanding
today's economy and
financial markets*

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THREDGOLD
ECONOMIC
ASSOCIATES

The TEA Company
A Professional Speaking and
Economic Consulting Company
1366 S Legend Hills Drive, Suite 150
Clearfield, Utah 84015
801-614-0403

www.thredgold.com

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Wouldn't It Be Nice If...

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

- ...the campaign for the American presidency didn't start soooooo early
- ...America's silent majority (our parents and grandparents) received greater respect for the enormous wartime sacrifices they made to help protect the freedoms we all enjoy today
- ...various state experiments in health care reform provided real promise for the nation
- ..."reality" TV would die a quick death
- ...the Bush tax cuts set to expire in 2010 would be made permanent. Hint: the tax cuts have led to the greatest three-year growth pace in tax revenue ever recorded
- ...teachers received more admiration and respect from students and their parents
- ...nature was less destructive
- ...the Iraqi people would take responsibility for dealing with terrorists, allowing U.S. military personnel to return home
- ...Paris Hilton's 15 minutes of fame were mercifully finished
- ...rising demand and higher prices for corn wouldn't push global food prices higher
- ..."old fashioned" common courtesy between people made a big comeback
- ...fewer people were killed each and every year in the name of "religion"
- ...golf was still a 3-4 hour game
- ...we didn't have one million lawyers in this country (more than the rest of the world combined)
- ...we would recognize that both short- and long-term interest rates remain quite low, even as the Federal Reserve remains on the sidelines
- ...the game of politics in Washington D.C. involved a little more cooperation and a little less confrontation
- ...American military personnel could see their families more often
- ...the housing "bubble" on both coasts and in the SW would continue to deflate gradually
- ...Johnny Carson was still king of late-night TV
- ...extremely tight U.S. labor markets in coming years would boost real (inflation adjusted) earnings of million of American workers. Note: it will happen
- ...incompetent corporate CEOs who drive companies into the ground were not rewarded with multi-million dollar "golden parachutes" to simply go away
- ...European governments would take more responsibility for serious problems close to home
- ...the outcome of many lawsuits was determined more by the facts and less by who has the deepest pockets
- ...smaller U.S. budget deficits during each of the past three years would continue
- ...the national media was more balanced in its reporting...and not so negative
- ...drive-by shootings were replaced by drive-by moonings
- ...the nation's tobacco companies would leave our kids alone
- ...more working people would save seriously for their Golden Years (an estimated one-third of the U.S. population saves zero for retirement)
- ...nuclear power (with NO greenhouse gas emissions) would make a solid comeback
- ...we would all get more involved in enriching the lives of those less fortunate than ourselves
- ...stock prices would continue to move higher (roughly 50% of American families now own stocks)

...we didn't have a \$9,200,000,000,000 gross national debt, and we weren't spending over \$1,000,000,000 DAILY just to pay the INTEREST on that debt

...“far left” liberals and “far right” conservatives would back off a bit

...we could strike a reasonable balance between energy conservation and the need for new sources of energy

...Howard Stern was never heard from again

...the role of “peacekeeper” wasn't associated with so much violence

...your garbage disposal didn't eat better than two-thirds of the world's population

...there were less irritating ways to bring buyers and sellers together than junk mail, spam, pop-up ads, telemarketing, and endless TV commercials

...politicians were elected based on experience and ability, not on who can spend the most money and sling the most mud

...what's good for you tasted as good as what's not

...the violence and language in today's movies could be toned down a bit

...men and women were from the same planet

...“government” would recognize that it is there to serve the people, and not the other way around

...we could benefit more from years of practical business experience of millions of retirees, rather than simply “putting them out to pasture”

...stronger Mexican economic growth would provide more good jobs at home

...members of Congress would finally recognize that reducing tax rates typically increases tax revenue...and increasing tax rates typically reduces tax revenue

...America's Vietnam War veterans would finally get credit for serving their country

...airlines that lack serious competition in various markets didn't gouge the public

...the Administration and the Congress would stop bickering and take the modest steps required now to “fix” Social Security and Medicare for the future

...residents of the Middle East could get along with each other

...more corporate leaders who commit serious crimes could spend some serious time behind bars

...the problems in schools today were still spit wads, gum chewing, and truancy, as opposed to violence, drug use, and pregnancy

...U.S. firefighters, police officers, and military personnel received our respect ALL of the time

...we could also find Osama Bin Laden hiding in a dark hole

...there was a stronger collective effort to improve opportunities in America's inner cities

...F.I.C.A. (Social Security/Medicare) taxes were less painful...four out of five American workers now pay more F.I.C.A. taxes than they do federal income taxes

...Fidel Castro would bite the dust and be replaced with a move towards democracy

...each long-term member of Congress was required to take a year off, start a new business with limited funding, and then deal with the complexities and hassles THEY have created

...primary and secondary schools had competition for teachers, students, and funding—just like colleges and universities

...more people would make donating blood a regular quarterly event

...many spoiled and pampered athletes in Major League Baseball, the National Football League, the National Basketball Association, and the National Hockey League had to get regular jobs at regular wages (at least for awhile)

...we would all keep in mind that despite the problems and challenges we face in the U.S., this is still the greatest country in the world

“TEA”ser

Q: How can you tell if two people are married?

A: You might have to guess, based on whether they seem to be yelling at the same kids.

—Derrick, age 8

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Thredgold Economic Associates
1366 S Legend Hills Drive, Suite 150
Clearfield, Utah 84015
www.thredgold.com

Graphics and layout by Kendall Oliphant
Research assistance from Shawn Thredgold