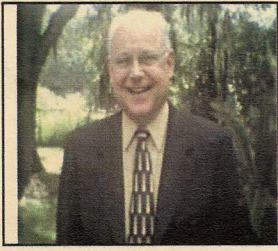


Smart Money News and Facts You Should Know!

135 SE 32nd Place Ocala, FL 34471

Phone 352-690-9574

Hank@SafeMoneyMBA.info



Hank Progar, MBA

Economy slumping, but Consumer Confidence is Starting to Rise

Consumer confidence at the end of March reached the second-highest level in four years.

Lower interest rates on mortgages and credit cards were one reason for the more positive view. According to a USA Today analysis, American households paid an average of \$8,731 for mortgage interest in 2007. For 2011, the average interest was \$5,633.

For the three-week period ending on March 25, The Bloomberg Consumer Comfort Index showed more than 30 percent of households said they had a favorable view of the buying climate. It was the longest stretch since early 2008.

The economic gain for borrowers is greater than government stimulus efforts or high gas prices.

Job and income growth are providing consumers with the means to withstand higher fuel costs and are the basis for sales of cars and other expensive items. Economists at the National Automobile Association say even if people aren't paying attention to their falling interest rates, the money builds up in their checking accounts and especially benefits big-ticket items like cars.

The favorable reduction in household debt shows that many responsible Americans are using the extra cash to pay down credit card balances, which is always a wise move.

Consumer spending is a big factor in U.S. economic growth, so if you need a car or a fridge and can afford it, you'll perk the economy if you go ahead and buy it.

Hank's Thoughts ... Retirement in the Publics Supermarket

Recently my wife and I stopped by one of the Publics stores in Ocala to pick up a few things.

As we were checking out I noticed an elderly gentleman in his 70's was bagging our groceries. He was feverishly moving cans and boxes from the counter to a plastic bag and to my cart like he was on a high speed assembly line.

I asked him where he gets all his energy. He said "at my age you have to have it" "Why?" ... "I need the money" he said. I guess he felt threatened by the younger baggers. His fear blinded him so much that he failed to notice that many of the younger generation move very slow.

About this time the lady punching the keys at the cash register, who was hunched over the counter squinting at an item looking for the price, looked up and said "at your age?" ... "I'm 89". "What keeps you here" I asked. "I need the money also"

What's sad is I'm seeing this occur more and more. How does this happen? Did they plan this out when they first entered the work force.

Did they lose all their savings in the markets ... or just fail to save? Did they talk to the wrong financial advisors or did they choose not to listen?

When your doctor prescribes treatment do you accept it or do you ignore it or tell him you want to think about it for a few weeks?

(Continued on page 3).

