

Dollars & Sense

Thrifty

By Jim Akers, Controller

The word thrifty dates back to the 14th century. Merriam-Webster defines thrifty as, “thriving by industry and frugality, given to or marked by economy and good management”. Merriam-Webster defines frugality as, “careful in the management of money or resources”. I like the addition of the word resources in the definition. I also like what Donna Dunn says in an article she wrote, “By being thrifty with some things, I have more time, money, and energy to spend on what’s important to me.” That is similar to something I wrote last time. I was saying that we first need to decide what is really important; what do I really need, as opposed to what I may really want. I think being thrifty is a matter of our mind-set. We have to really consider our important resources, not only our money, but of all our resources, such as our time and energy. By paying closer attention to all our resources, a lot of important things sometimes begin to just fall into place.

I recently read that it is not as much the impulse buying at the grocery store that is a waste of our money, but it is the waste of food that Americans throw away. The article said as much as 45% of the food we buy is wasted. Think about that the next time you are doing my favorite pastime, standing there staring into the refrigerator. I am wasting energy, too. Usually, after going to the grocery, coming home with items, and going to put something in the freezer, I find one of the same items, freezer burned, and end up throwing it away. I am also sure I would save money if I paid more attention to preparing and eating an actual



serving size instead of making more than I really should be eating.

Let’s talk about some other really important matters. The POTA Bonus appears to be very achievable this year, though it will be less than this past year’s, which was, by far, a record year. Despite the way the economy is going, please make sure you participate in our 401K plan. Please make sure you maximize, to the best you can, the matching amount from the company, \$0.50 per every dollar you contribute, up to a maximum match of \$1,000. With the market being like it is right now, I caution anyone thinking about doing a rollover into a different type fund out of your 401K. The reason I say that is that you, in essence, may be selling what you have in the 401K at a low value, so it may not be the best time to sell right now. I am not advising, I am just bringing up a point to consider. There are many rules governing 401K plans, but remember, our plan administrator is the only person who can give you all the rules that apply to our plan. If you have questions about any rules about our plan, you may direct questions to Melissa Price at (540)-982-1678.

With regard to your funds, Graham Spiers, chief investment officer at the firm Waypoint Advisors in Norfolk, in the Virginia-Pilot September 16, 2008 said, “What should individual investors be doing right now? Avoid panic. Yes, portfolios and retirement funds such as 401K’s are taking a beating, but financial advisers caution investors, especially long-term investors, against the urge to sell.”

PRESIDENTIAL Ponderings



by Tom Partridge, President, E.V. Williams, Inc.

Many are asking, what else can go wrong? I can understand the question when I realize America continues to be involved in a long drawn out war that many think should have been over years ago. Additionally, our largest financial institutions have taken to the government welfare rolls to stay afloat. Many of our neighbors are losing their homes and automobiles because the banks can no longer carry the massive debt that was created during the recent good times. On top of all this, our candidates for the presidency are telling us how bad the other guy is but not really proposing solutions that could solve our current challenges. I believe the reason why our politicians have failed us is because the problems are ours, not theirs. As Americans, we take the bad times and turn them into good times. We work harder. We make government smaller and we take responsibility for our actions. While I could be asking, “What else can go wrong?” I would rather look around to see what can go right. I live in the greatest country in the world, I am still able to go from state to state without a passport or identification papers. Gas is expensive, but it is still cheaper than it was in 1963 when I was in Europe! No one cares if I am a Christian, Jew, Muslim or any other religion; most could care less about the color of my skin. They just want me to be a law-abiding citizen that is willing to contribute to my family, my neighborhood, my community and my country. Thank God we live in such a great country. Times are tough and may get tougher, but together we can pull through it until normalcy returns again.

SPOTLIGHT on EXCELLENCE

Gorilla Snot Is Green

By Michele Aiken

While walking through the halls of E.V. Williams, Inc. you might hear snippets of any number of conversations. Much of the shop talk I hear, quite frankly, leaves me wondering truly what my coworkers are talking about. So it should not have come as any surprise to me when I walked into the break room to find Dennis Miller, our V.P. of Operations and he asked me to write an article on Gorilla Snot.

O.K., I figured this must be a Minnesota buzz word for some everyday item and in a second he was going to let me in on the joke. The punch line was, he wasn't kidding. Gorilla Snot is a biodegradable soil stabilizer. It uses nanotechnology to stabilize soil and control erosion and dust. According to Soilworks, LLC, the innovator and manufacturer of the product, it is an "eco-safe, biodegradable, liquid copolymer used to stabilize and solidify any soil..." I thought it sounded impressive even if I wasn't sure what it all meant. As I dug deeper I found out that items utilizing nanotechnology are materials manipulated from the atomic and molecular level. The premise is that if you work on a substance that small, tiny alterations can cause dramatic changes on how a particle behaves. (Thank you, Google.) I began reading some of the promotional materials produced by Soilworks and found that the product was engineered for an array of projects from large commercial projects to residential projects and application can be as simple as watering the ground.

On August 28th, I took a ride to job 1166 (Tidewater Community College) in Virginia Beach with Dave LePage. While making our way to the site Dave fielded my construction neophyte questions with patience and clarity. He explained that in many cases the soil that would need to be treated would be more of a top soil that we would seed in order to maintain it in a pile until the next phase of construction began. The plants

root system would simply form a type of matrix within the soil causing it to be less likely to lose shape. This particular job had the added obstacle of consisting of a sandy soil mixture. Seeding would not work because first, the plants would not grow properly and secondly, the shape of each granule of sand is rounded and has a tendency to roll and shift. In order to maintain its shape another agent must retard the rolling nature of the sand. Enter Gorilla Snot. When we arrived at the site we were joined by a representative of Whiting & Turner, construction managers of this project and Commercial Seeding of Zuni, Virginia, the company actually applying the product. After mixing the product they begin application in minutes, spraying the compound from their truck on each side of the mounds of sand. The product is formulated to "set-up" in 24 hours and then guaranteed to stabilize the soil for 6 to 12 months with this type of application.



Commercial Seeding of Zuni, Virginia treats piles of dirt with Gorilla Snot to solidify and stabilize it until the next phase of the project.

Although the product shoots from the spout reminding me of the green slime I've seen on Nickelodeon it dries clear, odorless, non-flammable and environmentally safe. They circled the pile twice covering it with the green goop. It was a successful application and all lights are green...as green as Gorilla Snot.



Happy Birthday!

September 2008

Danny Maddox 9/1
Vernon Deihl 9/2
Steven Hart 9/2
Barney Shaw 9/03
Danny Wagner 9/4

Sharon Donahue 9/6
Jackie Davis 9/8
Mitch Norris 9/8
Clarence Wooten 9/8
Brian Tucker 9/10

Rodger Midgette 9/11
Wally Wallace 9/13
Willie Riddick 9/17
Jose Serrano 9/18
Earl Hollibaugh 9/21

Bennie Owens 9/26



Tom Partridge
Jay Openshaw
Dennis Miller

President
Vice President
VP of Operations

This publication is intended for viewing by employees and family members of E.V. Williams Inc. If you have material, topics or suggestions you think would be of interest to the employees of E.V. Williams Inc., feel free to e-mail them to the editor at: michelea@evwilliams.com, or bring a copy to the main office.