

November, 2003

Please Forgive My Debt, Even If it is \$35 Billion+

According to the Washington Post on 1 November 2003, Judge Arthur J. Gonzalez in New York let Worldcom exit from bankruptcy retaining nearly all its assets and absolved it from \$35 billion+ in debt. Now. I don't know how much Worldcom was worth but.... It seems that that \$35 billion+ could be well used in our economy these days. Who are the poor schleps that don't get their share of \$35 billion+? How much do you have to be worth to get \$35 billion+ of debt wiped off the books?

What do I need to do to get my credit card debt eliminated? A little help here please!

Rants Can't Find My Pants

So I am here listening to The Velvet Underground writing letters to the local paper and Land's End. I told Land's End to stop sending me their catalog. It goes right into the trash. Got web site? Yes? Don't send me the freakin' K-log!

I had to be more delicate with the local paper, The Frederick News-Post. We got a flyer from the city saying they were not going to collect grass clippings using the garbage service anymore. There are four or five sites in town where you can take your clippings for free (and pick up free mulch) but they recommend using a mulching mower and leaving the mulch on the lawn. Sounds good to me until they suggest that, if you don't have a mulching mower (say dat tree times fast), you should mow your lawn more often. Oh there ya go!!!! Lawn mowers...pollute the air terribly, contribute to global warming, and make so much annoying noise!

Bottom line: collect your grass clippings, drop them off at the landfill, and take some riper mulch home with you. Pour it on your lawn. When grass grows tall, mow again. Start again at "collect your grass clippings." At some point in this never ending cycle, you will start asking when global warming reached the point that Maryland was a jungle...and your lawn mower became obsolete. And the corn belt is back in Canada.

Penn State to Pay for Student's Online Music

According to the New York Times, Penn State worked a deal with Napster to allow its students to download music to three different computers and/or to listen to all the streaming content they want at no cost to the student. Burning the tracks to CD would cost \$.99 per track. The deal will cost Penn State considerably less per student than the \$9.99 per month the service normally costs.

Now, I am okay with doing things legally. I have paid \$9.95 per month since March to use Rhapsody. Their tracks cost \$.79 to burn to CD. I can listen to all the streaming content I desire. I love this service. However, I can't see spoiling adult students like this. I am glad I am not paying taxes in PA. Buying and listening to music is part of growing up and growing old. This embarrasses me. Would Penn State buy students CD's to keep them from stealing them? This is basically what they are doing here. Just say no to spoilage!

New Bike

I am soon to be the proud owner of a new Kawasaki ZRX-1200R. Let the good times roll. If you know anyone who wants to buy a Kawasaki ZR-7, let me know.

ISP's to Implement Tiered Pricing

According to "The Wallstreet Journal Online," some ISP's are researching ways to restrict bandwidth hogs by requiring higher priced packages to do such things as P2P and music and video file sharing. Cox Communications is apparently testing out a low-bandwidth plan for \$24.95 to \$29.95 and a high-bandwidth plan for \$79.95 to \$89.95.

This seems to be a bit of a spread! I wonder if this will affect the legal music service, Rhapsody, that I belong to. I should hope not since I mostly using streaming audio and occasionally burn CD's from their site. No actual "downloads" are available. I sure as heck don't want to pay \$80 or \$90 for broadband access especially since some services, including mine, significantly increased their download speeds at no extra cost!

The WSJ article mentions that ISP's are hesitant to expand their networks to accommodate growing usage and get nothing in return. What about all the unused fiber that was laid at the height of the telcom frenzy. I have read that only %10 of that infrastructure is in use and that all of it may never be used! Spin? You make the call.

Locked Out

Oh, joy.... I just got back from buying my ZRX-1200R to replace my stolen GSXR and, for the first time that I can remember for years, I locked my keys in my car. I could not see them (it was dark) but was pretty sure they were there. They weren't in my pockets, nor were they in my bags, nor were they on the ground around the car, that I could see.

So after checking everything three times, I decided to call my old roommate with whom I had left a key not much more than a month ago for such occurrences. Fortunately, he was there and answering his phone. He could not find the key right away so said he would call me back. In the meantime, I decided that I would, since I had left the window cracked, see if I could catch the lock with a bungee cord. After no more than a brief attempt at that, Dave called to say he had found the key.

He was cool enough to drop it by and wait for a minute to see that I could get my keys out of the car. I got in the apartment and started looking for my second car key and could not find it. I have a bunch of keys that I keep somewhere and the car key was not there. So, with my flashlight and a coat hanger, I headed back out to the car. The keys were as they should not be...in the freaking ignition!!!

It only took me about a minute to get my car unlocked. Dave and I retreated to the apt after that for a cold one. As I reexamined my set of keys that I keep somewhere, I found my car key attached to a ring just as it ever was. Maybe I should get my eyes checked and , while I am at it, get a check up from the neck up!

P.S. No State Farm, I did not leave the keys in my GSXR.

Millionaire Durst a Freak

According to the NY Times, real estate heir Robert Durst was acquitted of murdering a man he chopped up into pieces and threw into Galveston Bay. The actual killing was determined to have been accidental and an "act of self-defense." Well, read this article...Real Estate Heir Durst Acquitted of Murder...and you decide if this guy is a nutbag or not.

Church and State

According to the Washington Post, teacher at a Christian school got fined \$10,000 for visiting Cuba. Her defense is that, since she was distributing Bibles, she was on a humanitarian mission and therefore not in violation of the ban against travel to Korea. I see two problems here. First, I consider a humanitarian mission to be one that helps individuals find/get food, clothing and shelter. I am not sure that bibles fit any of these categories. Second, if the government condones this, they would be promoting Christianity in violation of separation of church and state.

When Will It Stop?

According to the WSJ Online, Cingular and Kodak have a new service that will allow cell phone users to store and retrieve photos online from their phone. When the hell will these tech companies stop coming up with these stupid, worthless ideas and convincing consumers that they must try them? How much is this going to tie up cell phone communications? I can see proud parents burning up the cell phone batteries...instead of pulling the pictures out of your wallet...you just show them to unsuspecting coworkers ad infinitum!

How Do You Insult a Stripper

According to the Washington Post, four Fort Benning, Georgia, soldiers were arrested and accused of stabbing a fellow soldier to death, burning the body, and burying it in the forest. They allegedly did this because the soldier insulted a stripper. What the hell do you have to do to insult a stripper?

Musical Dead Zone

Man...I was in the Raw Bar having a Sunday afternoon post shopping TB and shot of Cuervo expecting to be able to enjoy myself reading the Washington Post Outlook and Business selections. I was having a hard time concentrating on my reading due to the inane banter of two guys and two girls at a bar table behind me. I am not sure if they were both couples but think that at least one pair was a couple...although I began to wonder about the sexuality of the guy as the minutes passed by. I put up with it because one of the women was cute and maybe not part of a couple.

Nonetheless when talk turned to concerts they had seen and the one guy who's sexual preferences I questioned (not that I have a problem with questionable sexual preferences...who is to say they are questionable anyway?) spoke of his favorite concerts being Elton John, Billy Joel, the Police, and Phil Collins...I realized all was not well with rock and roll. The others did not reference that many more better concerts they had seen so I guess that this guy is okay in his circle of jerks. He probably is not too hip to Rage Against the Machine or Cypress Hill.

The name Dave Matthews came up a few too many times...freakin Phil Collins clone/wannabe. Reference to Def Leppard, G&R, and Santana brought their conversation back closer to level ground but mention of Kix and the movie "Spinal Tap" took the group back up to the stratosphere where they obviously were not getting enough oxygen to their collective brain...IQ 100.

As much as I wanted to improve their lives by jumping in and telling them they were total idiots ruining my experience, I decided to leave. As I paid my bill, I told Kathy, the barkeep, that the group was driving me insane. She said that she suspected that was the case. Does anyone care about the "Roadmap?"

How about some Jimi? "Message of Love" delivered by lead to the face! Pack the 9!

Lick and a Promise

My cat, Hamlet, 13 years old, is mocking my whole existence. He licks himself in front of me. And it has only been three or four months since he started doing it. Did he just realize it was possible? Is it something that comes to you (no pun intended) once you go beyond middle age? Is he just spiteful?

Muhammad, Tried and Tried Again

It did not take long for the jury to find Muhammad guilty...about six or so hours. Now they must decide whether he gets life in prison without parole or the death sentence. Either way, this is going to cost the taxpayer some bucks...as if it hasn't already! At probably a minimum of \$35,000 a year, he can be in prison for a long time. At a minimum of more than \$35,000 a year (I'm sure) he can sit on death row and make appeal after appeal...which will cost the taxpayer quite a few bucks. Either way, the taxpayer loses.

To top it off, a number of victims relatives want him to go to trial for each and every attempted or successful killing. How freakin' much is that going to cost the taxpayer? Let's put him behind us...unarmed of course!

Dell to Reroute Customer Service Calls, Home Users Lose

According to the NY Times, Dell's corporate customers complained of language problems and difficulties accessing senior technicians when their tech support calls were routed to Bangalore, India. So those calls will now be routed to U.S. call centers and the home PC users' calls will be routed to India. Riddle me this Batman...If corporate customers have trouble getting support from a particular support center, why does Dell think it can get away with routing home users, who are likely to be less proficient than corporate IT personnel, to India. Make sense? I don't think so!

Information Collection and Identity Verification

I ordered three things on the Internet tonight. One was through a site I can be sure is valid...the others make me wonder. I found them through suggestions from others or links from what I considered to be reputable sites. When I filled out the purchasing/shipping/credit card info, they asked me for, in both cases, the 800 number of the credit card issuer, and in one case, the issuing institution. After I was done with

these purchases I began to think that this was a bit too much information to have had to give out. I think that maybe they don't have direct connections to validate credit cards but...

AOL: The Disc's in the Mail

It is bad enough that you can get unwanted telemarketing calls, email spam, snail mail, and community newspapers but AOL tops the heap of shit spreaders by sending me a plastic box containing an AOL software CD that I wouldn't wipe Godzilla's ass with. What are we supposed to do with this...just throw it out? Why doesn't AOL do it for me...cut out the middleman? Or hey, here is a thought...don't make it and send it to me unless I ask you too!

I suggest that those of you who, like me, get this consumable every month, write "Return to Sender" on it and put it back in your mailbox. If the mailperson does not take it and send it back to AOL, leave it in the mail box. Finally, when your mailbox is so full (geeks pay attention, I am talking snail mail here, physical piece of property) the mailperson cannot put your mail in it, complain to the post office that your mail service is being interfered with by AOL!

If I do not ask for it, do not give it to me!

Thanksgiving

Have a happy and safe Thanksgiving!