

SIGN ON ..

DICK JOHNSON 4/8/12

HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE NOTICED HOW VOLATILE THE STOCK MARKET IS WHEN SOMETHING WIERD ^{THINGS} HAPPENING ~~SOME~~ SOMEWHERE THAT'S OF NO REAL IMPORTANCE HERE IN AMERICA. FOR INSTANCE, IF SOME BIG SHOT IN GREECE BREAKS WIND AT A MULTI-NATIONAL MEETING AT THE WRONG TIME, THE STOCK MARKET TAKES A DIVE. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF A TRIBAL CHIEF IN NEW GUINEA TAKES A NEW WIFE, UP GOES THE MARKET! I, PERHAPS LIKE MANY OF YOU, DON'T PAY TOO MUCH ATTENTION TO THE DAILY UPS AND DOWNS OF THE MARKET. OF COURSE, WE, LIKE MANY OF YOU, ALSO TOOK IT IN THE SHORTS WHEN THE MARKET WENT WAY DOWN A FEW YEARS AGO AND DIDN'T RECOVER FORTUNATELY, WE HAVE A CONSERVATIVE FINANCIAL INVESTOR AND DIDN'T GET HURT AS BAD AS SOME, AND WE HAVE RECOVERED SOME OF OUR LOSSES. I WAS TRYING TO THINK BACK TO WHAT THE STOCK MARKET DID WITH ENRON, BERNIE MADOFF AND THAT STANFORD JERK SWINDLED BILLIONS OF DOLLARS FROM THEIR UNFORTUNATE VICTIMS. FOR THE LIFE OF ME, I CAN'T REMEMBER, BUT SOMETHING LIKE THAT SHOULD HAVE AFFECTED THE MARKET. WELL, ANYWAY, I WAS ALSO THINKING ABOUT UNEMPLOYMENT. THEY TELL US THAT WE HAVE ABOUT 8 PERCENT UNEMPLOYMENT. TO ME, THAT MEANS THAT NINETY-TWO PERCENT OF US ARE WORKING. TO ME, THAT DOESN'T SOUND TOO BAD. OF COURSE, THAT EIGHT PERCENT IS PROBABLY NOT A REALISTIC FIGURE. NONE OF THE HOMELESS ARE FIGURED INTO THAT AND MANY HAVE QUIT LOOKING ~~AND~~ BUT EVEN AT THAT WE'RE PROBABLY AT A VERY HIGH PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYMENT. THE NUMBER COUNTERS ALWAYS TRY TO MAKE IT SOUND SO BAD, WHEN I STARTED WORKING IN THE GROCERY BUSINESS ABOUT

SIXTY YEARS AGO, I WORKED FOR A MAN WHO DIDN'T HAVE A LOT OF FORMAL EDUCATION, BUT WAS PRETTY SAVVY ABOUT MONEY. ONE DAY, I COMMENTED ON HOW SLOW IT HAD BEEN FOR A WHILE, AND HE SAID THE REASON WAS THAT IT WAS A PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEAR. IN THE YEARS FOLLOWING THAT, I FOUND OUT THAT OLD MAN NORRIS WAS RIGHT! EACH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEAR, SOMETIME DURING THE EARLY PART OF THE YEAR, PEOPLE STARTED TIGHTENING UP THEIR SPENDING AND HOLDING ON TO THEIR MONEY. THE MORE CONTENTIOUS THE ELECTION, THE TIGHTER IT GOT. PERSONALLY, I THINK THAT HAS MORE TO DO WITH OUR WEAK ECONOMY RIGHT NOW THAN ANYTHING ELSE. OF COURSE, THAT'S JUST MY OPINION AND I MAY BE WAY OUT IN LEFT FIELD, BUT I DO THINK THERE'S

SOMETHING TO IT. I SPOKE EARLIER OF TRIBAL CHIEFTAINS IN NEW GUINEA TAKING NEW WIVES. WHEN MY MOM AND HER FRIEND RUBY BROWN WENT TO NEW GUINEA, THEY VISITED A NATIVE GROUP AND THE CHIEF ACTUALLY PROPOSED TO MY MOM! I'M SURPRISED SHE DIDN'T ACCEPT! I HAVE TO SAY GOOD BYE TO MY BARBERSHOPPING FRIEND GLEN WOODS, WHO PASSED AWAY A MONTH OR SO AGO AT AGE NINETY SIX. I'VE BEEN SINGING WITH GLEN FOR ALMOST FIFTY YEARS. HE WAS A TENDER AND SORT OF A GRUMP, BUT A GOOD GUY UNDER THAT GROULKY EXTERIOR. WE'D BE SINGING SOMETHING CHEERFUL AND LIGHT AND WOULD SAY TO GLEN - SMILE! THROUGH THAT SOUR LOOK AND PURSED LIPS HE'D REPLY - "I AM SMILING!" I RECENTLY HAD A WOUND ON MY LOWER LEG THAT WOULDN'T HEAL AND WAS REFERRED TO THE WOUND CLINIC AT MAD RIVER HOSPITAL IN ARCATA. I JUST WANT TO SAY WHAT A GREAT GROUP OF CARING DOERS THEY ARE. AND I HEARTILY RECOMMEND THEM SIGN OFF