

Business news

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Business

The Hour

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IN BRIEF**Weston resident****pens investment book**

WESTON — Eric Tyson, a Weston resident, has written *Mind Over Money*, a book on personal finance, which was published by CDS Books this month and sells for \$21.95 and is available at major bookstores. The book guides readers to conquer common personal investment obstacles and develop good habits.

"Although, on occasion, a major illness or some other unavoidable problem causes people to fall short of their financial goals, far more often, long-standing barriers to dealing well with money are to blame," he writes. "As a financial counselor, I worked with far more people who had to overcome significant obstacles in their attitudes and behaviors than people who simply need a bit of sound financial advice to implement."

Among the highlights of the books are:

- Take a "historical inventory" of your money mindset. Set aside about an hour for personal reflection and ask yourself some pertinent questions.

- If you're working so hard you're neglecting your family, consider downsizing your home. Many two-income families know how hard it is to work and spend enough quality time with kids. But Tyson says there are creative ways to cut back on expenses so that you don't have to work so many hours.

- Temper your investment strategies with liberal use of the Serenity Prayer. When you invest in stocks and bonds, you must accept the fact that there will be short-term declines, sometimes substantial drops, in your investments' value.

The book also deals with helping children become financially savvy.

Tyson has previously written five national best sellers and is also the only author to have four of his books simultaneously on *Business Week's* business book best-seller list.

WBDC to offer**walk-in service**

STAMFORD — The Women's Business Development Council's is now offering "Walk-In" appointments with Business Counselors on four days each month at the following days and locations: January 9, 10, 11 and 12 at WBDC Stamford Office at Government Center, Room 10-30, Stamford; February: 6, 7, 8 and 9 WBDC at Milford Office Suites, 58 River Street, Milford; and March: 6, 7, 8 and 9 WBDC at Norwalk Community College Room W109, Norwalk.

Learn how WBDC programs and services can help you with your specific business and professional development needs. No Appointment Necessary.

For further information call (203) 353-1750 ext. 4 or email info@ctwbdc.org or visit WBDC on the web at www.ctwbdc.org.

EWN to hold**open house**

WESTPORT — The Entrepreneurial Woman's Network will hold an informal Open House for those interested in learning more about the organization and the benefits it offers to entrepreneurial women from 5:30 to 8 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 23 at Pymander Books & Gifts, located at 215 Post Road West, Westport. Kristin Howard, EWN member and bookstore owner, will be the host.

For more information or to register for the event, visit the EWN Web site at www.ewn-ct.org. For directions to Pymander Gifts and Books, call Charisse Lombardo at (203) 915-1875 or Wanda Toth at (203) 384-1237, or visit the Pymander Books Web site at www.pymanderbooks.com.

Japan halts beef imports

By **LIBBY QUAID**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Agriculture Department officials scrambled Friday to repair a delicate beef-trading relationship after Japan discovered a shipment containing bone that Asian countries consider at risk for mad cow disease.

Hours after Japan halted American beef imports, Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns dispatched inspectors to Japan and sent extra inspectors to plants that sell meat to Japan. He also ordered unannounced inspections.

The government barred Brooklyn-based Atlantic Veal & Lamb, the plant that sent the shipment, from selling meat to Japan. Johanns said he would take action against the department inspector who cleared the shipment. The inspector should have noticed the problem on plant documents, Johanns said.

"This just simply should not have happened," Johanns said during a news conference at department headquarters in Washington.

Department officials said that for now, American beef is being held at Japanese ports until the United States completes a report on what happened, which Johanns intends to deliver "immediately."

Johanns said he would try to reassure other Asian countries that followed the lead of Japan, which six weeks ago ended a ban on American beef imposed after the discovery of mad cow disease in the United States in December 2003.

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Red Inc.



Hour photo/ERIK TRAUTMANN

Melanie Szlucha demonstrates techniques helpful for mastering job interview skills.

No more sweaty palms at interviews

Business name: Red Inc.
Telephone: (203) 866-1606
Address: 4 1/2 Taylor Avenue G, Norwalk, CT 06854
Contact person: Melanie Szlucha

Web site: www.redinc.biz
E-mail: Melanie@red-inc.biz

Owners or key manager: Melanie Szlucha

Number of employees: 1

Number of locations: 1

Primary business function: Job Interview Coaching.

Brief business history: Melanie Szlucha has been a hiring manager for more than 10 years and a member of the Greater Stamford Toastmasters Club for five years. She founded Red Inc. two years ago to help people become more relaxed and prepared during the job interview process. Combin-

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ing the presentation and communication skills she learned in Toastmasters with her experience in conducting job interviews, she is able to coach job applicants through landing their perfect job.

Greatest accomplishment: Having a participant in my class land the next job interview she had by using the techniques I taught her. Also seeing the looks on people's faces when they understand where an interviewer is coming from — that there is definitely logic to the questions that they are being asked and that they can prepare and feel confident. Seeing the changes can I make

in people's lives by empowering them.

Company's guiding philosophy: Presenting yourself in a confident, friendly and professional manner will take you many places in this world.

Complete this thought: This is a great business to be in because ... as a coach and teacher, people expect me to tell them the truth about how they are presenting themselves. It is refreshing to be able to help people strengthen their strengths, and turn their weaknesses hopefully into strengths and show them that they have the power to get the job they are looking for. I give people hope that they can have a new future in a different job or career — they are not trapped.

Super Bowl still a strong draw for ads

By **SETH SUTEL**
Associated Press

NEW YORK — If Miss Piggy is dressing up like Jessica Simpson, monkeys are rampaging around office cubicles and networking druids are yammering into cell phones, it can only mean one thing. Super Bowl ads are on the way.

Despite nagging worries about declining TV viewership as more people plug in to their iPods and the Internet, the Super Bowl has proven to be a resilient stronghold of truly mass media. The game, which airs Feb. 5 on Walt Disney Co.'s ABC, is expected to draw some 90 million viewers, along with advertisers who want to reach them.

Super Bowl ads — estimated at about \$2.5 million for a 30-second spot this year — cost way more than the top price of \$750,000 for a spot on the Olympics, which start on NBC just five days later. For smaller marketers, that can make up a significant chunk of their annual advertising budget, but there's a certain cachet to being seen on the Super Bowl, which is routinely the most watched broadcast of the year.

To make sure they get their money's

worth several advertisers plan to leverage the impact of their spots this year by rolling out online promotions and other tie-ins.

Emerald Nuts, the snack food brand of Diamond Foods Inc., and men's deodorant Degree are both returning to the Super Bowl after successful debuts in last year's broadcast, and both are doing more online.

Degree took a chance last year with an oddball set of ads featuring doll-like figures who never took risks. While they weren't a huge hit with critics, the ads wound up generating a lot of interest online, says Kevin George, the head of marketing at Unilever, Degree's parent company.

This time, Degree will be making its new ad — which depicts daily life in a city populated entirely by stunt men — widely available for viewing and downloading on the Internet, including a "director's cut" and other variations, George says.

"It really helped get the message out there in a different way," George said of the online interest in last year's spots, which featured characters such as a

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State businessman charged with smuggling

Associated Press

NEW HAVEN — A Connecticut businessman illegally recruited Portuguese immigrants to work excessively long hours for low wages in his Dunkin' Donuts restaurants and home, federal prosecutors said Friday.

Jose Calhela, 46, was charged with illegally transporting and harboring illegal aliens. He faces up to 70 years in prison and fines of up to \$1.75 million.

Calhela placed employment advertisements in Portuguese newspapers, prosecutors said, then illegally brought man-

agers to the United States to work in his 10 stores in Branford, Westbrook, Derby, East Haven and Old Saybrook.

The managers were paid about \$250 a week for up to 85 hours of work, including landscaping, painting and snow removal at his businesses and home. They lived in Calhela's home or in an apartment he rented.

"This individual exploited, essentially, the American dream," U.S. Attorney Kevin O'Connor said.

Prosecutors accused Calhela of selling fake immigration documents to his managers.

His daughter, Diana Calhela also faces charges that she instructed the immigrants where to work and drove them to their jobs.

Both were arrested and were arraigned Friday.

"Allegations at press conferences are quite different from evidence," Calhela's attorney, William F. Dow III, said. "We're anxious to appear in court and address the evidence."

A judge set bond for Jose Calhela at \$3.5 million. He said he intended to put up \$1.5 million in cash and the title to his antique car collection. Prosecutors said he is a multimillion-

aire who sold all 10 of his stores last year for \$11 million.

Prosecutors said Calhela told managers to hire exclusively illegal immigrants. Hundreds of illegals worked at his restaurants using false Social Security numbers, prosecutors said.

The investigation began after a report by WTNH-TV revealed much of the alleged scheme.

Some workers are cooperating in the case, prosecutors said. Because they are considered victims, they will receive help staying in the country legally.

GE profits plunge 46 percent

By **JOHN CHRISTOFFERSEN**
Associated Press

STAMFORD — General Electric Co. said Friday fourth-quarter profits fell 46 percent as the industrial products, financial services and media giant absorbed nearly \$3 billion in losses selling most of its insurance business.

GE shares fell \$1.45, or 4.2 percent, to \$33.23 in afternoon trading on the New York Stock Exchange. They have traded in a 52-week range of \$32.66 to \$34.36.

But the results met expectations and the Fairfield-based conglomerate predicted strong profits this year. GE said the sale of the volatile insurance business last year and growth in developing markets would help boost the bottom line.

"We think we're on track for an excellent year in 2006," GE Chairman and Chief Executive Jeff Immelt said during a conference call with analysts.

Brian Langenberg, managing director of Foresight Research Solutions in Oak Park, Ill., said he is optimistic about GE's prospects this year, adding that the company is in the right markets and will no longer have to deal with the troublesome insurance business.

"It was boring," said Langenberg of the fourth-quarter results. "People wanted to be overwhelmed on the upside."

The company said net income was \$3.06 billion, or 29 cents a share, for the three months ended Dec. 31, compared with \$5.6 billion, or 53 cents per share, a year ago.

The results reflected a net loss of \$2.7 billion from its discontinued insurance operations. Excluding that, GE's earnings per share matched the 55 cents expected by analysts surveyed by Thomson Financial.

Total revenue climbed 3 percent to \$40.7 billion in the latest quarter from \$39.7 billion a year ago. The revenue was about \$1 billion less than expected due to fewer asset sales, changes in foreign exchanges and lower plastic volume in the plastics business, company officials said.

GE sold most of its insurance unit last year to Swiss Reinsurance Co. for \$6.8 billion in cash and stock. The sale completed a strategy to leave a troublesome segment and redeploy cash to investors and faster-growing businesses.

During the quarter, NBC Universal was the only segment that did not achieve profit growth of more than 10 percent. NBC had profits of \$801 million, down 7 percent from a year ago, as the premier of the film "King Kong" generated more than \$500 million in global box office receipts while the network has coped with the loss of popular television shows in recent years.

Profits jumped 25 percent to \$769 million in the industrial business, while consumer finance earnings increased 21 percent to \$770 million and commercial finance increased 18 percent to \$1.28 billion. Infrastructure increased 16 percent to \$2.4 billion and health care increased 16 percent to \$995 million.

Much of the growth is taking place around the world as GE boosts its business in developing countries. During the quarter GE acquired a majority interest in the oldest savings bank in the Philippines, announced the construction of the first desalination plant in Mexico, and reached a deal to sell 300 locomotives in China.

GE said it expects earnings per share of \$1.94 to \$2.02 this year, up 13 percent to 17 percent and a boost of 2 cents on the bottom end from its previous forecast. The consensus of analysts surveyed by Thomson Financial is for earnings of \$1.98 per share.