

Working Life

WORKING LIFE IS GOOD

Last month, we took a peek at the dark side of the workplace. So it's only fitting for this edition of "Working Life" to look on the bright side. Here are some things we really like for one reason or another, or for no particular reason.

New Meaning to the Fortune 100

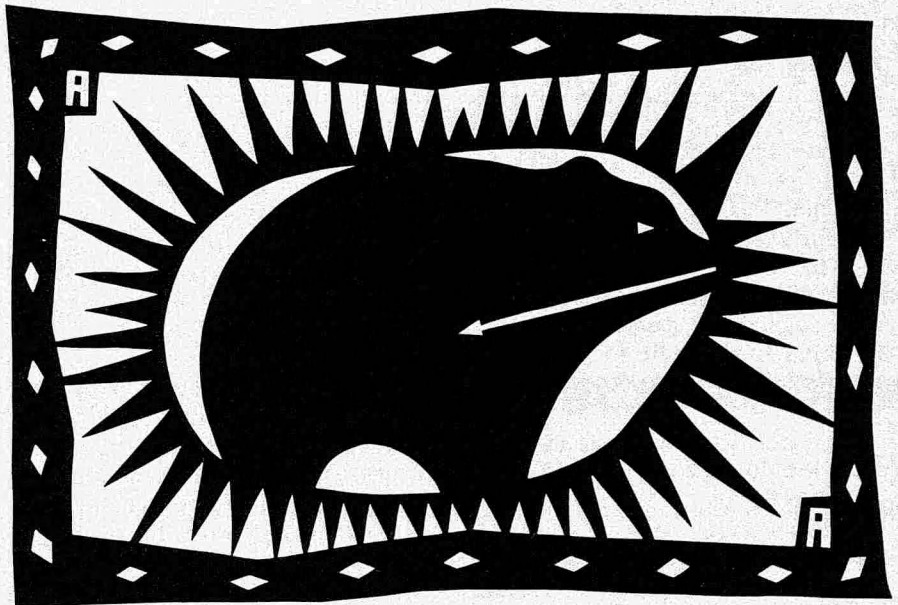
Look in some business executives' briefcases and you'll find the usual professional tools: a calculator, laptop, cellular phone, and Zuni fetish. Zuni whatie?

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, a lot of businesspeople wouldn't be caught working without their fetishes. At least one New York attorney never goes to trial without her Zuni bear fetish, which is a symbol for solitude and introspection. "It centers me," she says.

For the uninitiated, a Zuni fetish is an animal carved in stone by the Zuni, an Indian tribe of the southwest United States. Legend holds that once the fetishes are blessed by the Zuni, the carvings contain the spirits of the beasts they represent. Traditionally, Zuni hunters carried them for good luck, spiritual guidance, and protection. Today, the carvings are regarded as talismans with magical powers, by some Zuni and some non-Zuni.

A photographer's agent in New York keeps a collection of nearly 100 Zuni fetishes on his desk. Each morning, he consults with the group to determine which one of them wants to work with him that day. He says they speak to him. When he has to bid on a job, he makes sure he puts the buffalo fetish—a symbol for abundance—right on top of the bid while calling the prospective client. "Very often, I get the job," he says.

Zuni fetishes also include a mountain lion (for assertiveness), an eagle



(for getting an overview), and a hummingbird (for intuition). Supposedly, President Clinton carries a mountain-lion fetish, a gift from the wife of New Mexico's governor.

Apparently, the Zuni don't mind the fetishes being sold as good-luck charms, though a member of the Zuni arts-and-crafts enterprise says the fetishes should be considered just carvings, unless they're blessed by the tribe's medicine society at the annual winter-solstice gathering. Though the fetishes are being used much like lucky rabbits' feet, a Zuni carver says she doesn't guarantee good fortune.

By now, you probably want to know where you can get your own Zuni fetish. They're available at such stores as Keshi in Sante Fe, New Mexico, and Dandelion in the Philadelphia area.

Good luck!

I Want My Mommy!

A Denver software firm, Evolving Systems, advertised for an "office mom" to be a "nurturing care giver"

New work teams include bears, buffaloes, mountain lions, and hummingbirds.

to 133 of the company's "computer nerds," reports *Fortune*. The job description included taking lunch orders, remembering birthdays, and bringing soup to ailing workers trying to meet deadlines.

The winning applicant brought cookies to her interview. So far, she's removed a splinter from a finger of one of her charges, but she hasn't yet wiped anyone's dirty face with spit—as far as we know.

Mystery Job

Here are some bona fide job-interview questions, reported in *Working Woman*. Can you guess the job?

- ▶ Do you ice-skate?
- ▶ When was the last time you cried and for what reason?
- ▶ What are your favorite foods?
- ▶ Which five movies would you like to see again?
- ▶ Can you describe in one or two words how you enter a crowded room?

The position? Professional clown with Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus.

Corporate Spokespersons

Many companies in such polluted cities as Los Angeles and New York are providing bike racks for their employees in an effort to encourage commuting by cycle, says the *Wall Street Journal*.

In its Manhattan headquarters, Sterling-Winthrop has installed showers, lockers, and a dozen bike racks. Another New York company, with little space to spare, put bike hooks on its ceiling.

Apple has allowed employees to park their bikes at their desks for years, though in the company's new research center, racks and lockers are amply provided.

For Your Next Meeting

In charge of the next office party? Wow 'em with barbecue ribs from Corky's Bar-B-Q in Memphis, Tennessee. The popular eatery—where it's always a 45-minute wait—will ship your order of ribs overnight ready to heat and eat, via Federal Express.

You get six servings (three slabs), one bottle of dry seasoning, and a bottle of sauce for \$89.95. Call 800/9CORKYS.

M-m-m good.

Workaholics

You're only 60 seconds away from serenity, according to Dawn Groves, author of *Meditation for Busy People*.

The guide is designed to help people enjoy the peacefulness of meditation even if they can spare only a few minutes a day. The jargon-free book describes simple meditation techniques you can use on the job. It also gives you ways to handle workplace distractions. The techniques aim to reinforce such benefits of meditation as increased energy and awareness.

Sections cover meditation styles, setting the right environment, and creating your own ritual.

You can order the book from Publishers Group West by calling 800/227-3900. The cost of the 160-page paperback is \$10.95.

Tips for Trips

Away from home on business and missing your significant other?

If for four or more consecutive nights you stay at a Marriott Residence Inn and rent a Hertz car, you can send flowers home for free anywhere in the continental United States. The hotel stays and car rentals don't have to occur at the same time.

"Wouldn't It Be Nice?" (The Beach Boys)

The Dow will reach 8500, mortgage rates will fall to 5 or 6 percent, inflation will disappear, and America will resurge as the premier global economic power.

At least that's what futurist and author Harry S. Dent Jr. says on the videotape, "The Great Boom Ahead." According to Dent, we are on the verge of the greatest boom ever in economic growth, spurred by maturing baby boomers.

Addressing an audience on the tape, Dent uses researched graphs to support his views. But, he cautions, individuals and organizations have to recognize the opportunities and prepare.

You can order the videotape by calling Video Publishing House, Schaumburg, Illinois; 800/824-8889.

Dressing Down Is Up

Business casual is a national trend.

In a poll of 500 human resource

managers conducted by Levi Strauss, 67 percent of the respondents said employees at their workplaces can dress casually for work at least one day a week. It seems that many companies have adopted casual-dress days to promote relaxed work atmospheres and improve employee morale.

But what exactly is business casual? Does it mean no ties for men and pants for women? Are jeans and shorts OK? Premier Presentation offers a 20-minute videotape—appropriately called, "Business Casual"—to help companies educate employees about clothing guidelines.

To order the tape, leader's guide, and workbook, call 800/747-6569. The cost of the package is \$550.

Spreading Joy in the Workplace

A person laughs 15 times a day on average, according to informal surveys of more than 125,000 participants of psychologist/joyologist Steve Wilson's humor seminars.

Wilson's book, *Super Humor Power*, and newsletter, the *Steve Wilson Report*, show you how to get the laughter you need. The publications contain humor, words of encouragement, and material to use in talks, memos, and newsletters.

Wilson says that part of the proceeds from the book are being donated to help build and operate a haven in Tennessee for abused, abandoned, and neglected children.

To order the book or subscribe to the newsletter, contact DPJ Enterprise, Columbus, Ohio; 614/268-1094.

As Wilson says, don't postpone joy.

Next month, "Working Life" focuses on work and family.

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