

## Shirley Whittington



Staying au courant requires keeping one's ear to the ground -- a posture which is made ridiculously easy by the latest craze to come out of the west -- hanging upside down.

Two Vancouverites are promoting the benefits of hanging upside down for five to ten minutes a day. They strap their feet into an anti-gravity machine -- really a teeter-totter with ankle grips -- and swing away.

It's claimed that a daily spell of total inversion makes one feel lighter, improves circulation, helps migraines, and alleviates sore backs. At least one chiropractor agrees. He says that gravity has the single most harmful effect on joints and spinal discs.

(He's right. That's why I lie down a lot.)

Although getting there can't be that much fun, hanging in an upside down position has its attractions. Some of us are sagging here and there. Cheeks are threatening to envelop chins, chins are encroaching upon necks; lower down even more overlapping is oc-

curing.

If one were upside down, all this would be reversed. Double chins would slide behind the ears somewhere; overhanging paunches would merge into chests. People over forty would look terrific.

But alas -- who would see us when we were looking our best? Only bats, and other inverts.

Some people actually end up half an inch to an inch taller after a spell of hanging around. This is because the spaces between the vertebrae become elongated.

Is the height increase permanent? I hope so. I can't imagine anything more distracting than chatting with someone who is slowly but definitely subsiding before my eyes.

Hanging upside down could be boring unless you are suspended in a row, with people you like. Together you could sing songs like "A smile is a frown upside down." Or you could watch TV upside down. Shows like

## Smile: You're on an anti-gravity machine

Loveboat and Gilligan's Island viewed upside down, might approach some elementary kind of sense.

The idea for the anti-gravity machine came from a Californian (surprised?) who said he got the idea from Hippocrates, a Greek physician who as well as being the father of modern medicine frequently announced that he felt better after a spell of being head over heels.

(Few people know that Hippocrates once fell from his primitive anti-gravity machine and biffed himself pretty good on the head, which caused him to utter his now famous Hippocratic oath.)

Today's hangers upside down are unlikely to fall off their perches. The machines are designed like ski boots with grips and straps and price tags that run from \$120 to \$449.

If personal inversion catches on, shin splints and tennis elbow will take a back seat to a rash of new sports injuries. Upside downers will show up at doctor's offices with

falling hair, bulging eyeballs, hangnails and dropsy.

I don't think hanging upside down is for me. Chickadees hang upside down and they're cute, but not that brainy. No team of chickadees has yet sent another chickadee to the moon.

If God had intended us to spend large amounts of time upside down, he would have given us rubber tipped trivets instead of heads.

But the fad will catch on, and soon accessories for those who like to hang around upside down will blossom in your neighbourhood Canadian Tire store. Hairnets and tie clips will sell well I think. And straps to keep your eyeglasses from falling into your hair.

I notice that joggers and serious walkers are buying small stereophonic radios called Walkmans.

What, I wonder, will they call similar radios meant for serious hangers?

## Bill Smiley



If this column appears in your local paper with a black border around it, you can shed a silent tear, or a noisy one if you'd rather.

The black border will mean this is the last column you will ever read by Bill Smiley. It will mean that he has a brand new set of wings, and is swooping and gliding about with the cherubim and seraphim. Or that he has a brand new coal shovel, and is shovelling away with the incubi and succubi of the other place.

It will mean that he has succumbed, simply succumbed, to a combination of playing three roles at once: Head of the English Department, a German general, and A Man Called Trepid.

Head of the Eng. Dept. in June is enough to whiten the hair of a new-born black baby. First, there is the administrivia, about 10 memos a day: Please have your inventory completed by yesterday (60,000 books); Your list of books for rebinds has not been submitted, it was due last Friday; You have not completed the inventory of the classrooms in your department (as though somebody had walked off with six desks and a waste-basket since last June); Where were you when the emergency meeting of department heads concerning gum-chewing by custodians was held? Where do you hide every time you are paged? When will you have your course outlines ready, or are you going to use the

same old ones, merely changing the year? And so on.

That I can handle. I usually stagger through and collapse in a lawn chair the day after graduation.

But this year another ingredient was tossed into the mire in which I wallow each June. It was known as Operation Get Kim-and-the-kids home from Moosonee.

With complete disregard for my advancing debilitation, she blithely suggested that I hire a U-Haul trailer, drive 500 miles, load her stuff - including a piano - into it, and drive home, with her and the kids in the back of our car, no doubt sleeping.

The piano weighs only 700 pounds. I can lift 25 without throwing my back out. I wouldn't drive 500 miles in a day to see Cleopatra kissing Joe Stalin.

That was out, and even my wife agreed that there comes a point.

As far as I was concerned, she could hitch-hike, including the 300 miles from Moosonee to Cochrane, which contains no road. But I had to think of the boys, perhaps being carried off and dumped into James Bay by mosquitoes, or eaten to the bone by black-flies.

So I swung into action with my calipers, my maps, my calculator, and my wife shouting at

## This could be too much to handle

me to tell her not to sell her toaster, and to sell her ironing board, because we have lost her another toaster, and we have an ironing board, an extra one, that almost works.

She hired a box-car from Moosonee to Cochrane. A mere \$380. Still 500 miles to go. I dropped a few hints around the staff room, cheerily describing my problem.

Two friends of mine, who are entirely out of their minds, announced they'd go and get her and the kids and the stuff: "No problem. We'll drive up Saturday, pick up the stuff, turn around and drive home."

"What about the piano?"

"No problem. We've done pianos before."

"What about all that driving?"

"No problem. We'll take turns sleeping."

As far as they were concerned, it was a mere jaunt. As far as Kim was concerned, during \$80 worth of long distance, no problem.

As far as I was concerned, it was a logistical nightmare. Supposing my friends got to Cochrane on a Saturday afternoon, and the freight yards were closed up for the weekend, and they all bumped into that old malicious bureaucracy: "Sorry, we close at noon on Saturdays. Nope there's nothing I can do. Just hafta wait until Monday." In some countries you can bribe officials, but not in this one.

Suppose all the U-Hauls were taken for that particular date. Suppose the furniture storage place had no room when they got here. Suppose the wife of one of my friends broke a leg, and the other friend slipped a disc before they started. Suppose the boys had scarlet fever when they arrived in Cochrane and the whole expedition had to be quarantined for three weeks.

Now I know how a general feels when he's planning an operation. Do all the paperwork, get everything set, and then some idiot shoots his foot off with an automatic pistol, and he is your key man for for the whole works.

At times I felt like General Rommel. The trip was laid on. The freight yards would be open (according to Kim, whose Intelligence Service I trust as far as I could kick a jeep), the U-Haul was reserved.

At others I felt like General Scheisskopf. The storage space gave me the gears and demanded a financial rip-off. Kim calmly said she'd meet my friends in the Cochrane station at 4:30 I've been there. You could not find your Uncle Dudley in the Cochrane station.

Anyway, the green flares have gone up, the Operation is launched, and I am crouched at home, feeling Trepid, which I presume is the opposite of Intrepid (meaning fearless).

## Investor's Inquiry



by Charles Colling

Last week I outlined the different types of bonds and debentures or "Debt Securities" where a fixed rate of interest is paid on the "Loan" until its maturity. Capital gain is rarely involved in a debt security.

This week I will outline preferred shares which rank second in seniority to bonds and debentures but of course, are the senior equity securities, ranking above common shares. These shares enjoy a dividend income at a fixed rate and of course are eligible for the income tax credit.

If a company should wind up or fail the preferred shareholder would share in the assets of the company as opposed to the common shareholder, he or she does not have

a vote in the management of the company like the common shareholder does.

There are mainly five different classes of preferred shares, all containing one or more pre-arranged conditions upon issue. They are outlined briefly as follows:

Convertible Preferred - may be, at the option of the shareholder converted into a specified number of common shares of the company.

Participating preferred - is entitled to share with the common stock in excess profits of the company in the form of extra dividend payments.

Redeemable Preferred - In which the company has the right to call in for redemption at a premium at any time upon due notice

## The preferred shares story

to the shareholder.

Sinking Fund Preferred - The company sets aside each year a certain sum from profits for the gradual retirement of the preferred share issue.

Purchase Fund Preferred - under the terms of which the company agrees to purchase each year on the open market for retirement purposes only if the stock is at, or below, a stipulated price.

In addition to these, there is what is known as an Accumulative Preferred which may or may not be included in any of the aforementioned classes, and means that if a dividend is omitted, it accrues to the credit of the shareholder and must be paid in full

before any dividends can resume on the common stock.

All these details and conditions are outlined in the prospectus of the preferred issue or in the case of existing issues can be supplied by an investment dealer.

In sending in questions to be answered in these columns, please remember Securities Commission Regulations will not permit giving opinions or recommendations on any specific securities.

All other signed inquiries will be answered as soon as possible. In all answers only the inquirer's initials will be used. Address all questions to "Investor's Inquiry" c/o The Midland Times, Box 609, Midland, Ontario.

## You and Your Credit



by Paul Mattar, Credit Bureau of Midland, Penetanguishene, Collingwood

Why do your creditors get upset when you don't repay your credit accommodations as you originally agreed?

I only know it's easy for you to say it's only a few dollars and it's only a little late and your intentions are good and I'm really not trying to cheat my creditor, but I'm in a temporary bind.

Let's look at it from their point of view.

When you receive a credit accommodation, whether it be for goods or services, the business you are dealing with must provide

funds from somewhere to service your account.

It doesn't matter much if the money is the company's own or they borrow the dollars to provide the service to you.

The accounts receivable of a business are the central point of their daily cash flow which is the life blood of any organization. When credit is extended to you, the agreed upon repayment schedule is programmed into the cash flow pattern and the company depends on this plan to look after their daily, weekly and monthly obligations.

When you don't pay on time, the company

can run into difficulties in meeting their own commitments.

When a business has a reasonably strict policy that they stick to they are assuring their customers of even treatment on all accounts and at the same time assuring that they will be around to provide the goods or service you want to buy.

They know that because of the frailties of human nature there will always be credit losses. Every credit loss is a direct charge against profit which is the measure of success in any business organization.

A credit loss at some point in time has to be

reflected in the pricing structure that dictates what the customer pays.

The end result of this business cycle is that if you pay your obligations on time without prompting, you are contributing to your own best interests by first maintaining your good credit reputation in the credit community and at the same time helping to maintain lower prices that are reflected in lower credit losses by the business.

If you have specific topics or questions you would like to have discussed, just write to "You and Your Credit," P.O. Box 176, Midland, Ont., or call Paul Mattar at 526-5468.