

WHERE MY DOUGH GOES

Spending your hard earned cash is not been difficult for any of us. Maybe it's tough for Bill Gates, but not for any acquaintance of mine. If you have disposable income, and if you have a peculiar interest or hobby, you can kiss your disposable income good-bye. Probably some income that isn't disposable, too. Let's start with something I don't do, and that's bicycling.

Right up front, I have to admit that cyclists annoy me because most of them have no body fat. I admit to being somewhat rotund, and have had no success in persuading members of the opposite sex that this should be a desirable body trait. Women somehow seem attracted to the lean and muscular type, which in my view is a mistake.

First of all, these flat bellied, lean types have to work at staying that way which seems to me to demonstrate an unhealthy addiction to appearance. They probably pose regularly in front of a mirror, in fact are likely have several mirrors in their home. Cyclists dress to show off their trim bodies, too, which again shows a concentration on the body which would not make them a paragon of mental health. .

Speaking of appearance, the great majority of cyclists seem to affect a bizarre dress code which consists of brilliantly colored skin-tight apparel somewhat resembling court jesters of old. But this clothing has many special features. There is padding in funny places, like the fanny and the thighs. I suppose this is because the seat of a bicycle cannot be sat upon without causing irreparable damage to the posterior area of the body, but doesn't it make sense to have a more comfortable seat on the bike than to buy pants with padding in the nether regions? ?

But back to bucks. We had a bike race in Milford recently, and I was flipping burgers for a while for the participants. In a conversation with one of the racers, while he was mounting two identical bikes on top of his car, he stated that each bike retailed for *over \$10,000*. No kidding. Ten grand. I never thought you'd have to mortgage your house for a bike.

Like cycling, you can certainly go overboard participating in any hobby. Golf is a good example. The ball sits there on a little tee, a perfect target, a person could hit it with a pool cue. Yet a driver (the club one smacks the ball off the tee with), is made of precious metals like titanium, and is grotesque in size so you won't miss the stationary ball. One club is called the Hippo, and some drivers retail for seven hundred dollars! My observations indicate paying big money for equipment is not much help when the player has a dearth of skill. The golf accoutrements are numerous too, now including GPS systems so the distance to the hole can be measured in inches, although your average golfer can't hit the ball with anywhere near that accuracy. You may watch the

occasional golf game on television, but it isn't the same game played on regular courses by regular people. These regular people hurl their clubs skyward accompanied by colorful invective, whiff trying to strike a motionless ball using a golf club with a head the size of a cantaloupe, regularly cheat, and wear clothing only slightly less ludicrous than a cyclist. I play at golf. I make no claim to being intelligent.....or competent.

I also know something about fishing, and boy, can you ever spend money on that. Each time Diane and I sit down to a fish dinner, if it were costed out, we'd throw up. The boat, the rods and reels (several of each), and the lures to attract the fish are very costly. I buy new lures all the time, seeking the ultimate magic. Lately I've been using Gary Yamamoto Senko Rubber Worms hooked wacky style. It's kind of insulting really to call it wacky, when what it really means is you have to be wacky to use it. Once, my daughter tipped over the boat and my tackle box sunk to the weedy bottom of Smith's Bay. I put in an insurance claim, but the company was loath to reimburse me unless I could identify what was lost. I began to recite the lures...the Rattlin' Shad, the Wee Froggie, the Crazy Crawler, the Jitterbug, the Lazy Ike, the Flatfish, many different spoons like the Daredevil, spinners like a #4 Mepps, ...and then the insurance guy in the face of this undecipherable language, gave up and told me to replace

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