

YES, YOU CAN



IDEAS FOR ACHIEVING FINANCIAL SECURITY AND A MORE MEANINGFUL LIFE.

S T O W E R S I N N O V A T I O N S

S U M M E R 2 0 0 4

Stowers Innovations, Inc. helps people Discover the Good Life!™

Our concepts and products provide information that makes people aware of how they can live a meaningful life through an understanding of their values, personal relationships, finances, health and mental well-being. Our unique success principles are based on the beliefs of James E. Stowers, Founder and Chairman of the Board of American Century Investments and Co-Founder (with his wife Virginia) of the Stowers Institute for Medical Research.

Good Times Are Worth Remembering

If someone asked what is most important to you in life, chances are the first words out of your mouth would be “My family.” At some point, you may have even changed jobs or moved to a different city just to be closer to family.

So why not make the most of the precious hours you spend with family members? After all, just by being together, younger and older generations create new memories. The summer months are a great time to share activities that will preserve these memories for your children and grandchildren to enjoy. All it takes is a little planning and gump-tion. As the

television ads say, “Just do it.”

One of the best ways to share — and save — memories is to organize a family reunion. Whether you plan a picnic or a potluck supper at a community center, getting generations of family members together helps everyone, especially the children, gain a sense of belonging.

continued on page 2



Good Times Are Worth Remembering

pg. 1

Vacations Can Be Fun-Filled and Frugal, Too!

pg. 5

Making Summer Meaningful

pg. 8

Coping with the Cost of College-Bound Kids

pg. 10

Experience the Priceless Joy of Raising Kids Without Going Broke

pg. 12

What Do You Want to Give Your Children?

By James E. Stowers

Which would you rather do – give your kids the money they need to have a comfortable lifestyle when they become adults or give them the values and skills necessary to go out and earn their own living? While it is the wish of many parents to provide for their children's every need, it is not necessarily in the best interest of the children to do so.

I know that one of the greatest gifts a parent can give a child is an education. More so than money or material items, an education will stay with them their entire life. With a sound education, children can build their own future based on their decisions and fundamental beliefs.

Whether teaching children about money, communication skills, literature or life values, parents should be an example to their children and practice the same behaviors they want their children to adopt. That's what my parents did for me. They convinced me, by their examples and teachings, that if I was absolutely determined to do my very best, I could succeed at anything.

*James E. Stowers, founder and Chairman of the Board of American Century Investments and co-founder of the Stowers Institute for Medical Research, is one of the nation's wealthiest men, a leading philanthropist and author of **Yes, You Can ... Achieve Financial Independence**.*



Yes, You Can is a free newsletter created by Stowers Innovations, Inc. **Yes, You Can** is published on a quarterly basis. For additional copies, call 1-800-234-3445 or write:

c/o Alexis Preston
Editor
4500 Main
Kansas City, MO 64111

Writers contributing to this issue include: Debbie Hagen, Elaine Kincaid, Susan Peppertine. Illustrations by Paul Coker, Jr.

continued from page 1

How often should you plan a reunion? Five years seems too long, and every year is probably too often to draw good attendance. Some families settle on a happy medium by holding a reunion every other year.

Here are some ideas to help make your reunion a success:

- Pick a location that's close to your oldest family members since they may be less willing, or able, to travel.
- Provide information on reasonably priced lodging options. You may even be able to negotiate a lower rate and a meeting room if you can guarantee a certain number of reservations.
- Keep the event simple by letting everyone bring a dish or chip in on costs.
- Bring "family tree" charts to display and photo albums to leaf through.
- Take lots of pictures, including group shots showing each generation.
- If any family member has a video camera, encourage him to bring it.
- As the reunion is winding down, choose two relatives in different cities to be responsible for planning the next reunion.

Storytelling gives "heart" to any family reunion.

"In 1996, I asked all of my relatives to jot down their family stories and send them to me. After gathering about 40 stories, I typed them up and made copies to hand out. During the reunion

Helping elderly relatives record their life stories is one activity you'll never regret.



everyone gathered in a circle and took turns reading the stories aloud. Since then, my four oldest aunts and uncles have died, so I'm really glad their stories have been preserved."

— Susan, stepmother of three

Helping elderly relatives record their life stories is one activity you'll never regret.

If your relatives aren't this motivated, you can give them one of the fill-in-the-blanks memory books now on the market. Or you can record a lasting impression on videotape.

Gary, a volunteer for the Veterans History Project, interviewed more than 200 World War II veterans in 2003, the most of any volunteer. Here are his suggestions for conducting a videotaped interview:

- Start with questions about growing up — descriptions of parents, grandparents, siblings, pets and school experiences. Even asking about a favorite toy might bring back special memories.
- With relatives who are veterans, ask about their time in the military. When and where did they serve, what was their rank and what were their experiences?
- Go through a chronology of each decade of their life — work history, how they survived the Great Depression and what they think of all of the new inventions they've seen come along.
- Ask about their family — marriage, children and grandchildren — and favorite memories

continued on page 4

Mark Your Calendar

Coming this October 10–16... Achieve Financial Independence Week™. Inspired by the proven philosophies and practices of James E. Stowers, the week of October 10–16 is dedicated to making people at every life stage – from children to newlyweds to retirees – aware of ways to achieve financial independence. Visit www.stowers-innovations.com for more details.

about holidays, graduations, weddings, births, vacations and other memorable family occasions.

In the process, you may be surprised at the insights you'll gain about your family and yourself. When Kay videotaped a two-hour interview with her mother, Virginia, she learned for the first time the full story about the time her mother was expelled from the Presbyterian church's Sunday school class for being a rowdy seven-year-old. Her parents switched to the Methodist church, where Virginia's new Sunday school teacher became a lifelong friend — and later helped Virginia get the job where she met her future husband, Kay's father. "I discovered that I might not be here today if Mom hadn't been kicked out of her church!" she laughs.

When you videotape an interview, it's a good idea to close with thought-provoking questions

about your relative's views on life. "At the end of each interview," Gary says, "I always ask, 'What has meant most to you?' or 'How would you like to be remembered?'"

When considering those questions, James E. Stowers, author of *Yes, You Can ... Achieve Financial Independence*, responds by saying, "I would like to be remembered for what I did for others rather than for what I did for myself."

If you're thinking of things you can do for others, a good place to start is by making happy memories — and preserving them, too. Then, in years to come, instead of saying, "If only I'd made a videotape of Grandpa..." you'll be singing a different tune — Bob Hope's theme song, "Thanks for the Memories"! ■

You'll be surprised at the insights you gain by videotaping family members.



Vacations Can Be *Fun-Filled* and *Frugal*, Too!

Planning a family vacation that won't break the bank may seem daunting, but it's doable. And it's more fun when your kids help plan the trip. Here are some ideas to consider.

Tap the Family

You don't want to make yourself a nuisance, but staying with relatives (especially those who have repeatedly asked you to visit!) can be a great way to have an affordable vacation.

"Growing up, my family took three family vacations to Baltimore because that's where my aunt lived. We had free lodging and we could cook our own evening meals. And each time we were able to do something new and different because Baltimore is so close to Washington, D.C., the Atlantic Ocean and many historic sites and playgrounds."

— Janice, recent college graduate

Kids' Activities – Get your kids involved in planning the trip by scouring your library for travel books about your destination. Or have

them surf the Internet (supervised, of course) for cool things to see in the cities you'll be traveling through.

Soak Up the Great Outdoors

Enjoying nature with your family is a great way to spend quality time without spending a lot of money. Campgrounds charge minimal fees to pitch a tent, your meals are cooked over the open

continued on page 6



continued from page 5

fire, and the options for entertainment are endless. There's swimming, canoeing, fishing and hiking, to name a few. Plus, many campgrounds are in picturesque parks or national forests, so photo buffs can go crazy.

"We had great fun camping with our extended family, packing a lunch and canoeing down the river for a day or two. It was an economical trip, but one of my fondest childhood memories. I hope to do a similar trip with my son in the next few years."

— Seth, landscape designer

Kids' Activities – In advance of your trip, have your kids identify the things they most want to do while you're camping, and plan each day's activities. Plus, they can make lists of what to pack, what kind of food to cook over the campfire and things to do in the tent if bad weather sets in.

Explore Your Own Backyard

If it isn't feasible for your family to pack up and "go" on a vacation this year, think about what's readily available in your own community to enjoy. Many families rarely see the sights in their own hometown. There are free museum exhibits, war reenactments, local parks and street fairs to enjoy. Plus, don't forget the zoo, nearby theme parks and local sporting events.

"We were on a budget one summer, so instead of taking a vacation like we usually did, we found a great rate at a large local hotel that had an indoor pool and lots of activities nearby. Our older son was in college, so we let our younger son invite a friend and we spent one night there. It really gave us two days to do all the activities surrounding the hotel. Our son loved it, and we spent less than a fourth of what we would have spent on a week's vacation!"

— Debbie, a mother of two boys

Kids' Activities – Have your kids create a list of all there is to do in and around your city (you can call to request literature or a Web site address from your local Convention and Visitors' Bureau). You will probably need more than a week to do everything on the list, so have them prioritize what they'd most like to do. That way, you can hopefully find something that everyone will agree on before you start your vacation.

Surf the Net

If you've explored all the other vacation options but a true getaway to a resort is what your family is longing for, there are ways to make that happen. Check out travel Web sites or go directly to the Web sites of the resorts you're most interested in. They'll often have specials listed that can save you a bundle. And many airline Web sites offer Web-only fares that are significantly lower than regular coach fares.

"Colorado is a favorite destination for our family. So I signed up to receive email alerts from several resorts in Colorado, which they send when they offer special packages or reduced

rates. We learned of a great value at one resort in particular, so we headed west and had a great trip!"

— Joann, working mom with one son

Kids' Activities – Suggest your kids make a scrapbook of your trip or keep a photo journal. They can start with a brochure of the resort or a printed-out Web page that shows where you're headed, then fill in with pictures taken throughout the trip.

All in all, just spending time with your family — no matter where that is or how much money you have — can make for priceless vacation memories. ■



Suggest your kids make
a **scrapbook** of
your trip or keep a
photo journal.

Making Summer Meaningful



Many working parents worry about how to make their child's summer vacation a meaningful experience. It's tough for any parent, but especially tough for those who work and won't be home every day to help orchestrate activities that will keep a child busy and productive.

Here are some things to consider:

Develop a reading program – Sit down with your kids early in the summer and help them identify some books to read over their vacation. Be sure to help them select a mix of books that reflect education, adventure and fun, then head to your nearest library to check them out. Helping your kids develop a love of reading early on and learning how to use the library will be a true blessing to them for the rest of their lives.

Explore your family's history – There are all kinds of fun ways to learn about your family. Your kids can take charge of capturing all the great family stories over the summer at reunions and family visits. Also encourage your kids to begin

documenting their immediate family history through photo journals and video stories to assist generations to come.

Inspire a volunteer spirit – Children find a real sense of fulfillment in helping others. Opportunities for volunteerism are endless and can range from something as simple as providing assistance to an older neighbor with daily chores, to aiding a large organization.

There are all kinds of organizations looking for volunteers. There are also opportunities at nursing homes and retirement homes, or through community support groups that perform tasks like fixing up homes in the inner city. Check out your community's newspaper or search the Web for more opportunities in your area.

Complete a major household project – Over the course of the summer, have your kids go through their old toys and treasures while cleaning out the basement, then help them hold a garage sale from which they get all the proceeds. Your family can even take on other household projects, like painting the bedrooms or planting a garden.

Get some real-life office experience – Many parents today are either self-employed or work for companies that are open to having children



help out in the summer. Suggest a summer project in your office that would be helpful for your company and a great learning experience for your child. With or without pay, it will look good on their resume when they begin looking for work years later.

Attending a summer camp can be an exciting adventure and a wonderful growing experience for your children.

Local summer day camps – Most communities have a number of summer day camps available for children of all ages. Day camps are often quite affordable and cover a broad range of interests from exploring nature to learning computers and improving sports skills. Some zoos even offer “Zoo School” where children spend the week helping feed the animals, learning about their native habitats and doing cool things like riding an elephant!

Summer school – Could your student use a little extra help with Math, English, a foreign language or another course? A few weeks of summer school can be a cost-effective way to help students catch up on challenging classes from the past school year, or get a jump on the fall semester.

Overnight camps – Attending a summer camp can be an exciting adventure and a wonderful growing experience for your children. Can't afford an expensive wooded retreat? Be sure to check out Y-camps or church-related organizations. They are often much more affordable — plus, many churches open their summer camps and other youth trips to all kids from the community. In fact, they often encourage young people to bring their friends!

These are just a few ways to ensure this summer brings a meaningful experience for your kids. By providing a positive and productive summer vacation, you can help create memories that last for years. ■



Learn the value of money – The summer months can be a marvelous time to help your kids begin to understand the value of a dollar. Giving them a set amount they can spend each week – and helping them understand what is acceptable for them to spend it on – will be the beginning of a solid financial education. For terrific examples of financial learning activities to do with your kids, you can refer to the recently released book by Stowers Innovations, **Yes, You Can ... Raise Financially Aware Kids**.



Winner of the 2003 Gold Parenting Benjamin Franklin Award



Coping with the Cost of College-Bound Kids

It's high school graduation season, and you may be in the process of shopping for your college-bound teen. Needless to say, you feel a sense of relief that high school is finished. Congratulations to you for helping your child get this far!

This summer will be a summer unlike any other. Your college shopping list has probably turned into a scroll. Don't despair, there are some surefire ways to cut a few corners. Plus, just like in business, there are some one-time start-up costs that will be an investment that carries your teen through all four years. Here are some tips.

Bank on the basics

Start out with the basics. Sit down with your child to outline both what they want and what they need.

Every college has a list they send to first-time students, showing the layout of the dormitory and the basic supplies that are needed to survive dorm life. Some basics that should be considered "musts"...

- Shower shoes
- Shower caddy
- Robe

- Towels
- Toiletries
- Twin sheets, a pillow, a blanket and a comforter (consider a full-sized or larger comforter that you have at home to eliminate the need for a bed skirt)
- Laundry basket and detergent
- Quarters for laundry
- Anything else that is used regularly by your family members, like blow dryers, curling irons, an iron, an ironing board, etc.

"When I started college in 1997, I bought some nice towels, and I'm not ashamed to say, seven years later, I'm still using them."

— Marie, 2001 college graduate

Share when possible to conserve space and money

If your teen has already been assigned a roommate, suggest calling them up to see what they're bringing. There's no need to have duplicate things like refrigerators or microwaves.

Don't automatically buy a computer

This is a big decision when sending your student off to school. If your teen doesn't have his/her own computer, you may wrestle with the decision. Here are some things to consider before making this big purchase...

- Many dorms have computer labs that are open much of the day and night.
- Your student's roommate may bring a computer they can share.
- More and more colleges are "wireless campuses," supplying students with laptops as part of their regular fees.

Also, when you receive the dorm layout, you'll know if there's a communal kitchen for the kids to use if there's ever a need for larger appliances or for your student to make the infamous ramen noodles at 3 a.m.

"I won a microwave at Project Prom, and after calling my roommate, I knew he had received a refrigerator as a graduation gift, so we were set."

— Levi, current college student

Use what you already have

Another tip is to figure out what can be recycled from high school. Not everything needs to be new on the first day of class. Students can recycle their...

- Backpacks
- Clothes
- Shoes
- School supplies (pencils, pens, binders)
- Posters or wall hangings to decorate their rooms

Shop Smart

There are many ways to be a savvy shopper for your college student. A few things to keep in mind...

- Shop at discounters and watch for flyers announcing sales on towels, laundry supplies, etc.
- Keep your eyes open in May and June when passing by college dorm curbs for abandoned appliances, books and even desks.
- Accept hand-me-downs from friends who have already put their kids through college.

"I have a close friend who has already put her girls through college. When her kids graduated, they stored their college appliances at her house, so she was glad to see my boys get some use out of them."

— Ella, mother of three

So "shopping" may not be the accurate word, but keeping your eyes peeled for unusual opportunities may help you cope with college start-up costs. Yes, there will be initial expenses, but you can always find a way to get the best deals. ■

Experience the Priceless Joy of Raising Kids Without Going Broke

Author Shares Secrets to Financial Freedom and Family Happiness



Kids aren't cheap. According to the United States Department of Agriculture's Consumer Expenditure Survey, the cost to raise a child from infant to age 17 has gone up 680 percent in the last 40 years, from \$25,000 in 1960 to more than \$170,000 today.

"Many people become parents without fully realizing the financial implications of raising a family," says Sam Goller, author of the new book *Yes, You Can ... Afford to Raise a Family*.

"Fortunately, with a sound financial strategy they can focus more on the true joy of raising kids and less on the day-to-day finances of life."

Yes, You Can ... Afford to Raise a Family is an innovative resource, published by Stowers Innovations, Inc., to help parents create a healthy family lifestyle in today's environment of mounting consumerism. Topics include managing family

finances, understanding the role money plays in a family, reducing finance-related stress, teaching children the value of work and saving for college.

"This is a great book to help families minimize financial stress and maximize financial health," says Dr. Laura Schlessinger, syndicated radio host and author of the New York Times Bestseller, *The Proper Care and Feeding of Husbands*.

By implementing some of the strategies offered in the book, parents can develop healthy family financial habits and teach their children the value of a dollar.

For young families, Goller offers these tips:

- **Begin saving for college now** – Start a college fund as soon as the positive pregnancy test comes back. The latest studies estimate that in 18 years the cost of one year's tuition at a state college could be as high as \$33,000.
- **Map out a work strategy** – Decide now if both parents will continue working full-time after baby arrives. If it is financially possible for one parent to

stay at home, begin living on only one paycheck during the pregnancy to get used to the reduction in income. Save the paycheck of the stay-at-home parent for baby expenses like nursery furniture or invest it in a college-savings fund.

- **Review life insurance coverage** – Carefully consider the type and amount of life insurance to buy. Pure Permanent Annual Renewable Term Life Insurance can be one of the least expensive ways to ensure financial stability for children in the event one or both parents die.

Make paying down debt a priority to building a solid family financial platform.

- **Give up small luxuries** – Eliminate extra expenses. Cutting out the daily latte and muffin can save \$1,500 a year.
- **Choose your locations wisely** – Avoid spending time in places where the temptation to spend is high. Spend time in a library or park instead of the mall to avoid going overboard on impulse purchases.

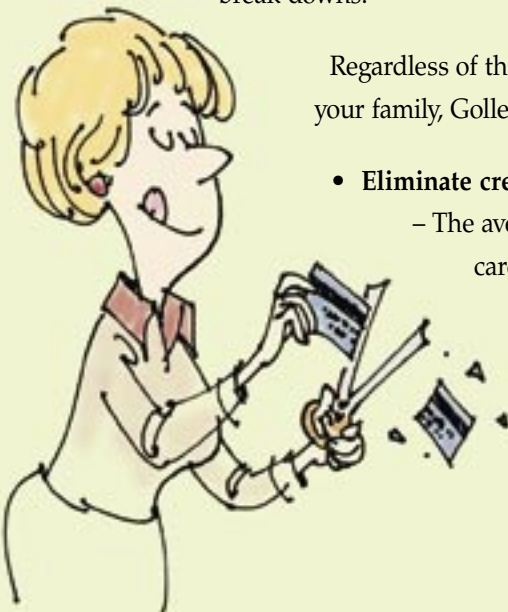
Give up small luxuries – Eliminate extra expenses. Cutting out the daily latte and muffin can save \$1,500 a year.

- **Start an emergency savings fund** – Set aside three to six months of living expenses for unforeseeable setbacks, medical emergencies and car break-downs.

- **Find hometown fun** – Find out when local restaurants have “kids eat free” nights, check the paper for free community events and contact the library and local museums about free family activities.
- **Pay Yourself First®** – Contribute to your retirement, saving and college funds before paying the bills each month. Use the remaining income to determine if you’re living within your means and adjust your lifestyle accordingly. The easiest way to stay committed to automatic investments is to make deposits on a regular schedule with a fixed dollar amount.

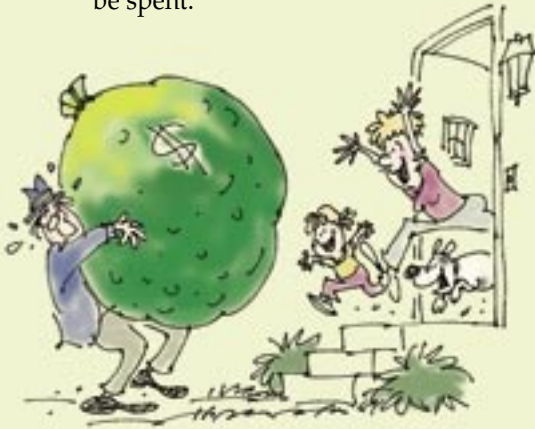
Regardless of the size or age of your family, Goller suggests:

- **Eliminate credit card debt**
– The average credit card debt per household in 2003 was \$9,205 with 13.5 cards per family.



continued on page 14

- **Hold quarterly family financial planning summits** – Sit down as a family once a quarter and go over the budget together. Show children how much money goes to fixed expenses and how much there is to spend on them. Together, discuss how the discretionary income should be spent.



- **Don't keep up with the Joneses** – Reject the temptation to buy children the latest gadgets, designer clothes and “cool junk.” Overindulging your children is only a temporary source of happiness.

“Whether they are ready or not, moms and dads become chief financial parents the day their kids are born,” says Goller. “They now have an opportunity to achieve financial independence for their family with proven and easy-to-use techniques.”

Yes, You Can ... Afford to Raise a Family is available by calling 1-800-234-3445 or online at www.stowers-innovations.com. The retail price is \$19.95. ■



Yes, You Can ... Achieve Financial Independence

was the first in the *Yes, You Can* series. Written by James E. Stowers, one of the country's top money managers, it offers real-world strategies for how to improve your financial position.

You'll learn important facts about stocks, bonds and mutual funds, as well as proven methods for finding extra investment dollars in your budget. The book comes with the *Stowers Financial Analysis* on CD-ROM, which you can use to organize your financial goals and develop a plan to achieve them. Retail price: \$19.95.

HOW TO ORDER

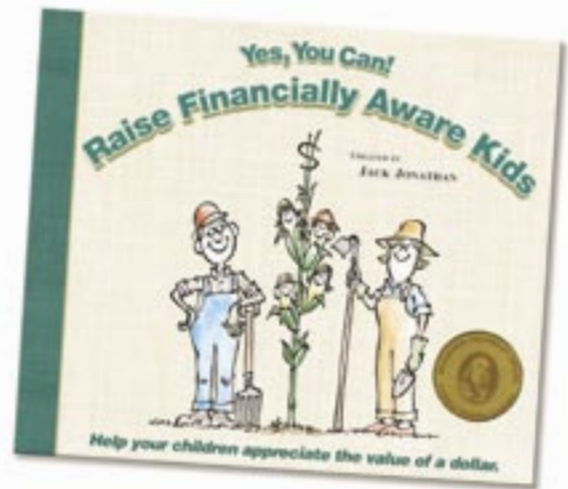
Get a wealth of insights from the *Yes, You Can* series.



Yes, You Can ... Afford to Raise a Family

Raising a family is one of the most joyful experiences in life. One of the most expensive, too. In fact, recent studies show that the average cost of raising a child in today's world is about \$170,000. A mind-boggling number to most people.

Of course, you know in your heart you'll get by somehow. But is it enough to just take it one day at a time, hoping everything will turn out for the best? Or would you rather decide what goals are most important for your family and put a plan in place to achieve them? Retail price: \$19.95.



Yes, You Can ... Raise Financially Aware Kids

Surprisingly enough, schools don't teach kids very much about money. One recent survey found that nearly 88% of high school students learned about money by watching their parents, not from a school program. This book gives you all the tools you need to make sure they're learning what you really want them to know about money.

Using simple examples, fun activities and engaging illustrations, the book helps you teach your kids important financial lessons now, while they're young — instead of having to learn them later on, the hard way. Retail price: \$19.95.

Call 1-800-234-3445, visit www.stowers-innovations.com, or use the enclosed order form to place your order now. And start learning to stay focused on providing a secure future for your family.

Please Give Us Your Two Cents Worth

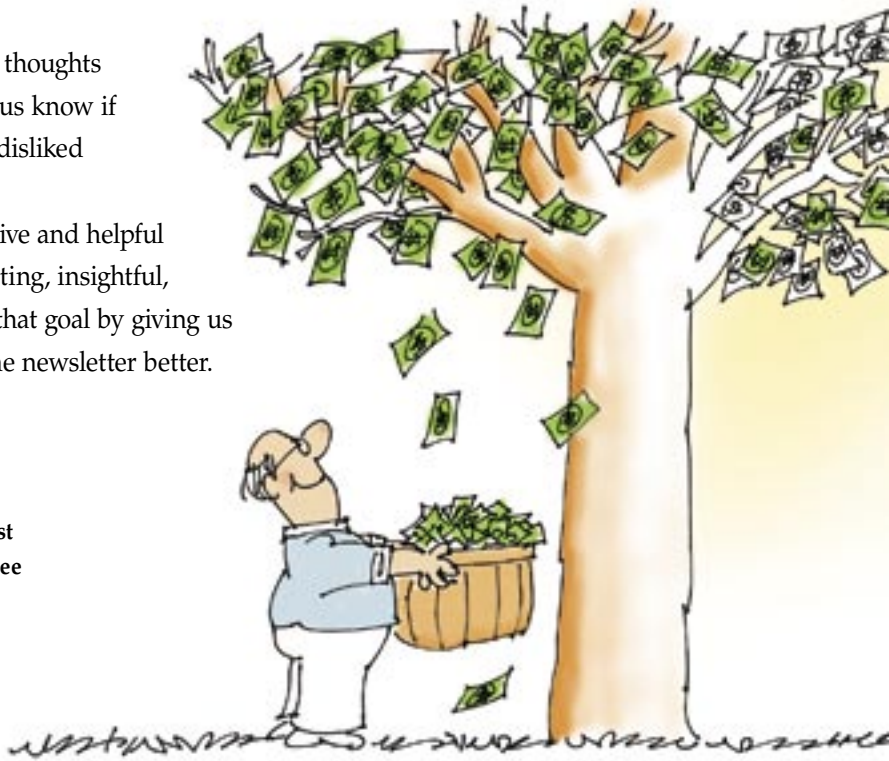
We are very interested in hearing your thoughts on the *Yes, You Can* newsletter. Please let us know if there were things you particularly liked or disliked about this issue.

After all, our purpose is to be informative and helpful to our readers, with articles that are interesting, insightful, and easy to read. You can help us achieve that goal by giving us your suggestions on how we could make the newsletter better.

To give us your two cents worth, visit www.stowers-innovations.com/feedback.



Respond by August 31 and receive a free activity book.



This information is for educational purposes only and is not intended as investment advice. Copyright © 2004 Stowers Innovations, Inc. All rights reserved.



210 N. W. Plaza Drive, Kansas City MO 64150

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #115
LIBERTY, MO