

When American Businesswoman first contacted me about writing Over Coffee, I was psyched. I drink lots of coffee and, frankly, I love that, that, that buzz. The B.C. (before-coffee) me, and A.C. (after-coffee) me are very different people. And the A.C. me is definitely the one you want on your payroll.

Over Coffee is a time when we reflect, muse, transition or buzz with ideas, depending on whether it's our first cup or our fifth. And we each drink our brew in our own way: some are latté drinkers, some espresso, others green tea or heaven forbid, decaf. This column is for us all.

By Gail Thomas

THE BUZZ IN BUSINESS



SO WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

Well, former Tyco International Ltd. CEO L. Dennis Kozlowski continues to tell investigators how stupid and weak he is...Regarding millions in bonuses that were magically missing from his income tax, Kozlowski was heard saying, "No one ever told me...duh...It never dawned on me...hiccup." Wow, wasn't this guy recognized as a shrewd leader known for his aggressive management strategies?

Yet, like all the cornered ex-execs who've gone before him, Kozlowski's current speeches make Homer Simpson look like a genius. Maybe he's still drunk from that now infamous, lavish Greek-themed birthday bash he put on Tyco's tab.

And speaking of inflating corporate profits, Maurice "Hank" Greenburg, the recently departed chairman of American International Group, may be the next blubbery idiot. At least I'm not the only one who's bad at math.

On a more romantic note, MCI has finally decided to commit to old flame Verizon after months of heavy corporate petting in that on-again, off-again relationship. Rejecting Qwest's more generous offer, MCI simply hummed, "New York, New York," and, oh yeah, said something about a large corporate network, computer traffic, data services and sales. Apparently jilted suitor Qwest has lost no time moving on and has recently been spotted surfing online dating Web sites, looking for a rebound relationship.

And speaking of change, the Catholic Church refuses to. Apparently the new pope is just like the old pope and the pope before that and the pope before...Doesn't look like we'll be seeing any women priests in the next million years. Hopefully we won't see any more pedophiles either.

At least President Bush is finally uniting the country. Everyone agrees that Gas Prices Are Too Damn High!!! Isn't the president an oilman from Texas? Don't he and Dick Cheney have any connections? This is just weird. I mean, Jiffy peanut butter didn't go up \$10 a jar while Jimmy Carter, the peanut farmer, was in the Oval Office. What if Herbert Hoover ascended to the White House and prices of

Iowa corn and grain ascended with him? Those things didn't happen because those guys used their experience wisely.

On that note, I hope you enjoyed our first rendezvous of Over Coffee...who knows what news we'll have to talk about next time. Meanwhile, have a fortuitist, fun and funky week.

abw