

# Playing the market

## Students win big during the Stock Market Game

By Sande Snead  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Imagine if you could take \$100,000 and turn it into \$174,000 in just 10 weeks. It sounds like one of those get-rich-quick schemes, but in this case it is an actual scenario for Jennifer Costello's sixth-grade math class at Bailey Bridge Middle School.

Too bad the money wasn't real. Costello's class finished with the top portfolio in the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Region of the Virginia Council of Economic Education spring 2007 Stock Market Game, beating out other teams from across metro Richmond.

The elementary, middle and high school teams with the top three portfolios at the end of the 10-week competition were recognized at VCU last month. The top three finishers in the division for each were nearly all Chesterfield County schools.

In the Stock Market Game, students learn how to read stock listings, the difference between bulls and bears, when to sell short, when to buy and more. Student teams are given \$100,000 in virtual money at the beginning of the 10-week session and challenged to find ways to make their portfolios grow.

"Students learn real-world math," said Suzanne Gallagher, director of the Center for Economic Education at VCU. "There's something about having \$100,000 to control that is very exciting."

Student teams can buy or sell on the New York, American or NASDAQ stock exchanges. They place their orders online, pay

brokerage fees and learn that if they do too much trading, they can lose money.

"This game really brings value and excitement to the classroom," Gallagher said. "The teacher has a lot of choices and yet it follows the [Standards of Learning] on saving and investing."

The secret to the success for one of the teams in Costello's math class was to invest all of its money in one stock. They chose the James River Coal Co. after studying a chart of its 52-week trading history.

"They found the stock was at its lowest, so they invested all \$100,000 in that one stock hoping it would go up, and it did," Costello said. "It was a risky decision, and we talked about how you probably wouldn't want to be that risky with real money."

Two of the teams in Lindsay Driscoll's Bailey Bridge sixth-grade math class also placed in the division. They won second and third place for middle schools.

"My students were researching car companies to invest in and came across Phelps Dodge which is a copper company," Driscoll said. "They looked at a chart of performance, and this company had gone through extreme changes, so they took a chance on it."

One of the six teams in Paul Kline's Manchester High School financial management class also did well.

"Two teams were back and forth in a competition the entire game," he said. "One invested in Sony and just let it ride, while the other would jump from stock to stock, and their earnings were eaten up in commissions."



Page Dowdy/Chesterfield Observer

As part of Paul Kline's (right) Manchester High School financial management class, student Jerry Chandler and his fellow classmates invested \$100,000 in virtual money in Sony stock and made a \$25,000 profit while competing in the regional Stock Market Game.

All teachers agreed that this is a fun way for students to learn SOLs.

"The game encompasses so many math SOLs," Driscoll said. "It covers decimals, reading graphs, and so many other areas, yet

the students don't even realize they are being taught SOLs."

One thing is certain, when these students talk about financial investing, people may want to listen.

## Steve Bassett rolls into Pocahontas State Park on June 30 for tour

Steve Bassett's Blowin' the Dust Off Tour rolls into Pocahontas State Park on Sat., June 30 at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$4, and children 12 and younger are free. The Pocahontas Premieres season pass does not apply to the Steve Bassett show.

Richmond's own singer-songwriter Steve Bassett, probably best known for his song, "Sweet Virginia Breeze," recently released his 18th CD, "Blowin' the Dust Off." The CD features traditional music played on Civil War-era musical instruments as well as a long list of guest singers and artists, ranging from Delbert McClinton, Gary Gerloff and Robin Thompson to Amber Collins and Ryan Blevins of No Speed Limit, and Virginia Gov. Tim Kaine.

From the success of the CD, a concert tour of 16 Virginia State Parks was born.

In addition to an evening concert, there will be an afternoon display and workshop featuring historic instruments of collector Chuck Kincaid, who provides a collection of more than a dozen instruments, including a bugle, fife, guitar, mandolin, zither, violin and squeeze boxes. The workshop is from 2-4 p.m.

Sharing the stage with Bassett is Virginia's own Michelle Nixon & Drive. With her unique blend of traditional, gospel, contemporary and classic bluegrass music, Nixon will be joined by Patrick Robertson (guitar, lead and harmony vocals), Jamie Harper (mandolin, fiddle), Jeremy Boling (five-string banjo), and Travis Greer (bass). Drive also serves as Bassett's backup band.

For more information visit [www.dcr.virginia.gov](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov), [www.stevebassettmusic.com](http://www.stevebassettmusic.com) or [www.michellenixon.com](http://www.michellenixon.com), or call (800) 933-PARK.

Advertisement

# "Average Joe" makes big money investing in real estate

*Joe Mercadante has created enough income from real estate in 12 months to retire at the age of 35.*



Rob Minton, Broker  
REAL ESTATE AUTHOR

Thirty five year old Joe Mercadante stumbled across a Free Real Estate Investing Report that has helped him create enough monthly income in 12 months to quit his high paying corporate job.

According to Joe, "I started investing in properties using the strategy outlined in this free report in April of 2004. I have accumulated 20 homes that combined are paying me \$4,363 of cash flow each and every month. Plus I have locked in \$580,442 of profit. I plan on quitting my 9 to 5 job next month and will be able to live off of the income from my properties!"

Joe was amazed at the profits that could be obtained using this simple investing strategy. He said that he never wanted to invest in real estate because he didn't want to spend his evenings and weekends fixing up homes. Joe isn't very handy and he didn't enjoy installing toilets, laying tile and painting.

Luckily, Joe read a real estate investing report entitled, "How to Make \$232,016 Each & Every Year Investing in Real Estate without Touching

a Screwdriver" and learned a simple strategy for profiting from investing in nice homes in nice areas. Joe stated that the majority of homes he had invested in were in move in condition. In a few cases, his homes were so nice that he had rented his properties before he even got his keys at the closing.

Joe liked this approach because it didn't require him to have the financial risk of having to pay the mortgage, taxes and insurance costs for a property during a rehab project.

Joe said that this approach eliminated the majority of the risk and, best of all; he could invest in his spare time. The approach seems to be working because Joe will be retiring from his \$120,000 a year corporate job at the age of 35.

**To get a copy of the same FREE report Joe used to begin his real estate investing, call the real estate information center at 1-888-390-5568 and enter extension 200. Leave a message with your mailing address. Or, go to [www.quitworksomeday.com](http://www.quitworksomeday.com).**

Report courtesy of Exit First Realty