Opinion

Death of a tradition

We mourn the passing of the American Seed Co., the Lancaster, Pa., firm that for more than 60 years taught youths the fundamentals of free enterprise and salesmanship. The business called it quits recently — the apparent victim of dishonest children.

The company operated out of an old brick building. There, its 125 employees packaged 88 kinds of flower and vegetable seeds, printed the catalogs and filled orders. American Seed's most important workers, though, were the children in its sales force, which at its peak numbered 350,000 across the nation. The company's ads could be found in nearly every juvenile magazine and comic book and carried a simple offer: Sell packs of garden seeds and split the proceeds with the company, or win a prize. The kids would sell the seeds for 60 cents and send back 40 cents a pack, or return all the cash and win a prize. Even a Rockefeller once sold enough seeds to win a sleeping bag.

In recent years, however, more and more simply sold the seeds and pocketed all the money. The company tried using collection agencies, but that seemed heavy-handed, especially since children were involved. Nor did anti-delinquency campaigns and "promptness contests" work. This year, the company's fifth straight in the red, American Seed lost about half of what it should have collected in revenues.

There were, of course, other factors in the company's demise — the end of the baby boom and subsequent reduction in the sales force, increasing postal rates and printing costs, and inflation generally. But it was the growing delinquency rate — 35 percent and rising — that finally did the firm in, the owners said. Perhaps American Seed should have followed the more pragmatic example of a profitable greeting-card firm that employs children. That company simply requires the kids to pay for the cards in advance.

Middle East myopia

Returning from Anwar Sadat's funeral recently, former Presidents Ford and Carter made headlines by telling reporters on the plane that the United States eventually will have to talk to the Palestine Liberation Organization before there can be any final peace settlement in the Middle East.

President Reagan was quick to point out that there never has been any unwillingness to talk to the PLO if that organization would recognize the existence and legitimacy of the state of Israel.

The problem is that the PLO's own charter dedicates the organization to the destruction of the state of Israel, and PLO leader Yasser Arafat says abandoning that goal is the trump card which he won't play until the time is right. On the other side, Israel's Premier Menachem Begin says Israel will never negotiate with the PLO because it is an organization of terrorists.

Other PLO leaders say they will never recognize Israel. And other Israelis say they would talk to the PLO if the PLO agreed to recognize Israel. So there are differences within both camps.

The fuss over the Ford and Carter statements should not obscure the basic points both men made:

— There will never be a just and lasting peace in the Middle East that does not address the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

— The Palestine Liberation Organization is recognized as the legitimate voice of the Palestinian people by all the Arab nations and, although it includes terrorists, it represents many people who are not terrorists and has the support of many people who cannot be described as terrorists.

The Palestinians exist and aren't going to go away. Israel exists and isn't going to go away.

But neither side will recognize the existence of the other. There won't be any real peace until both do.

Talk and action

It didn't get much media attention, but French Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy announced recently that France will produce its own neutron bomb.

The fact that there are 45,000 Soviet tanks on one side of the NATO perimeter and only 10,000 tanks on the other helped France decide to produce the N-bomb, said to be particularly effective against mechanized units.

So, while French President Francois Mitterand keeps urging a return to detente with the USSR, his socialist government is not putting its money where its mouth is but, rather, where the country's security lies.

Mitterand doesn't talk tough to the Soviets as President Reagan does. But in the final analysis, he doesn't trust them any more than does Mr. Reagan.

The interest crunch

by Anthony Harrigan

Nowadays, if one wants to buy a new home, one is likely to find that one can only get a mortgage loan for a two or three year period. After that time, the homebuyer has to refinance his loan.

That's an astonishing and shocking change from the days when one easily obtained a 20 or 30 year loan at a fixed rate.

The president of a mortgage company in the West recently wrote to me saying, "In my business, it is almost impossible to qualify prospective homeowners for any type of mortgage loan. Young, married people are particularly hurt and are not able to participate in home ownership. Those who must borrow are extremely vulnerable to the viciousness of high interest rates, whether it be to buy a home or to run a business."

This sums up the situation. Young people, who want a stake in our middle class society, are in the worst position they have been in since the Great Depression. Small businessmen are in danger of being driven out of business as a result of their inability to finance inventories. Only the largest companies are well-positioned to survive the storm, but even they face serious difficulties. Several large corporations are in danger of collapse, for one reason or another.

The United States must be very careful not to follow the course set by Prime Minister Thatcher in Great Britain. Mrs. Thatcher entered office with millions of Britons believing she would lick inflation.

Unfortunately, the Thatcher government has placed too much stress on monetarism, on eliminating inflation by reducing the money supply. In theory, this was sound. But the approach has been too theoretical. British business is suffering an unprecedented wave of bankruptcies. They can't borrow the money they need for inventories and expansion.

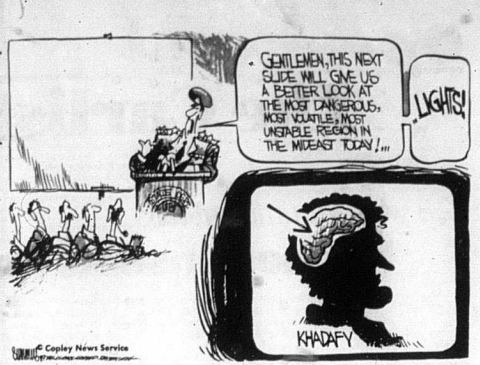
The United States also is experiencing a very high rate of bankruptcies. Only in the energy and minerals rich areas is there real prosperity. In the older industrial areas, the slump is severe. The continuing weakness of the auto industry is a major factor, as is the halt in new residential housing. The auto slump is caused by the flood of foreign cars, chiefly vehicles imported from Japan.

The Reagan budget represents a tough attack on federal spending, but even more drastic measures are needed. Inflation can be tackled by stern fiscal means, by reducing budget deficits, and pressuring the unions to ease exhorbitant wage demands. Unfortunately, the administration apparently has decided to hold up any campaign against monopoly unionism. If the administration means business, it will end its cozy relationship with the Teamsters and insist on repeal of the Davis-Bacon Act, which establishes unrealistically high wage levels.

The administration and the Congress also should place much more stringent restrictions on Japan's shipment of goods to the United States. European nations have responded much more effectively to the Japanese trade offensives, insisting that Japan take voluntary measures.

The interest rate situation should receive priority attention in the White House and Congress. The rates must come down if prosperity is to be restored and confidence in our system is to be maintained. If young people conclude that they can't get a stake in the community through home ownership, they will be pulled in a dangerous direction.

A disillusioned middle class isn't likely to reelect a conservative administration in 1984. That's a political fact of life that conservatives should recognize and act upon.



Agree or not

Governor's ego is often satisfied on the backs of state taxpayers

by S.C. Van Curen

When the political posturing and the public criticism are stripped away from the state's Sikorsky helicopter and the governor's promise to sell it, the bare financial facts are that it is just an expensive mode of transportation.

First off, the actual base price on the plane under the lease purchase agreement is $1,833,966 according to the contract in the Finance Department.

The money was borrowed from the First Security National Bank of Lexington at eight percent interest. The contract calls for monthly payments broken down into two-year periods running to 1988 with the payments escalating every two years.

The first period ends next June 15 when the monthly payments escalate from $12,500 to $25,700 to run until June, 1984. Then the payments jump to $32,900 per month until June 15, 1986 when the payments go to $40,100 per month until June 1988 when the state, must make a decision to pay off the balance of the contract or return the plane to the bank and Sikorsky. The balance due in 1988 will be about $76,000.

But this balance is reached after the state has paid out an approximate total of $3.3 million.

Next June 15 the state's equity in the plane will be $6,705.90. This would be the amount the governor would be able to turn over to education, according to his promise to sell the plane, that is, if the state should receive the original purchase price for the plane in the present very soft market.

When Gov. John Y. Brown Jr.'s 1982 budget ends June 30, 1984, the state will still owe $1,487,444, and that's six months after his term ends in December 1983.

While the aircraft industry figures operating cost on a commerical basis for the Sikorsky at $1,275 per hour, the state figures the cost at $750 per hour. Bob Kellogg said he had no knowledge of the commercial cost, but gave the $750 cost for the state which includes all the costs involved in its operation, including the investment and maintenance.

The state charges other departments of government $725 per hour for use of the plane and also charges Phyllis George Brown the same amount when she uses it to fly to Cincinnati to catch a plane for New York each weekend to do her NFL Today program for CBS.

Kellogg said this figure includes actual fuel costs and the pilots' salaries, but none of the overhead, such as maintenance, investment, etc. This fixed cost would be there anyway, Kellogg said if the plane were left to sit on the pad. Kellogg made no differentation whether Mrs. Brown is on her private business for CBS or for the state.

The governor uses the plane much of the time to travel from his home in Fayette County to his office in Frankfort and then back home.

Dr. Robert Warren, deputy secretary of Finance, rationalizes the lease deal by saying it is a good business deal for the state since the state is borrowing money at eight percent while loaning $3 million received from the sale of most of the state's plane fleet at 15 to 17 percent. He says "it is a wise business decision."

Warren also said state people are doing a lot less flying. Even though the state has some personal service contracts leasing planes, the cost is a lot less than spent by the previous administration when $800,000 was budgeted for planes and maintenance, plus million-dollar agencies of government were billed for use of the planes through inter-accounting.

No one will argue reasonably that the state should not have aircraft in this modern age for business use, but the demonstgnery should be cut out and the truth laid on the table.

Past history shows that plane choice and use has become a status symbol with governors. Gov. Louie B. Nunn sold the old Beechcraft used by the Combs and Breathitt administrations and took a leid-lease contract on a jet.

Gov. Wendell Ford campaigned against the jet and promptly canceled the lease when he went into office, only to enter a similar contract for a plane of his choice.

Gov. Julian Carroll wasn't satisfied with the plane Ford had and he bought two Merlins.

Now, Brown sold off the two Merlins, a Fairchild, two Navajos, a Bell helicopter and the Aero Commander used by the Department of Photogrammetry in the Highway Department.

Brown bought the Sikorsky.

Egos of governors are satisfied at the taxpayers' expense.

Down Memory Lane

Power defeats Coatney for Mayor

Thursday, November 9, 1961

Mayor Bill Power defeated Robert Coatney for the post of Carlisle's mayor in Tuesday's election by 320 to 219.

Dorsey Watkins was elected president of the Tri-State Milk Shippers Association at a meeting held at Paris Nov. 1.

The officers, directors and stockholders of the Nicholas County Development Corporation are happy to announce that the Nicholas County Lake project is now a reality. The corporation has purchased 514.70 acres of land on which will be located the new 159-acre lake formed by a large dam as part of the reconstruction of the Gallows Hill Road.

In the 5th Annual Tobacco Festival, scheduled Nov. 17 at the Carlisle Armory, a total of $330 is offered in prizes.

BORN — To Mr. and Mrs. Donnie Shields a son, Thomas Donald, Nov. 2 at the Nicholas County Hospital. — To Mr. and Mrs. Paul Hendrix a daughter, Debra Faye, Nov. 2 at the Nicholas County Hospital. — To Mr. and Mrs. Walter Norvell a daughter, June Talbert, Nov. 3 at the Nicholas County Hospital. — To Mr. and Mrs. John Ritchie a daughter, Regina Lynn, Nov. 3 at the Nicholas County Hospital. — To Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Cameron a son, Myron Steele, Nov. 4 at the Nicholas County Hospital. — To Mr. and Mrs. Robert Thompson Scott, Rochester, New York, a son, Robert Mark, Sept. 18.

MARRIED — Miss Sandra Sue Curtsinger and Ronnie Allen Gaunce, Oct. 13 in Maysville.

DIED — Airman Leroy Hawkins, 25, Wednesday in a car accident near Benton, Ark. — Robert U. Wilson, 74, Sunday at St. Elizabeth Hospital in Covington. — Mrs. Elizabeth Gillispie Shannon, 91, Monday at Miller Nursing Home in Lexington. — Mrs. Marline Bowles Mynear, 30, wife of Walter Dean Mynear, Sunday at the Nicholas County Hospital.

Thursday, November 6, 1941

L.T. Potts celebrated his 94th birthday on Tuesday with his three children, Mrs. M. Burton of Lexington, Henry M. Potts and Mrs. S.W. Kellar.

Henry Howe Brandstett, son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Brandstett of East Union, second year law student at the University of Kentucky, has recently had the honor of being appointed by the faculty of the Editorial Board of the Kentucky Law Journal.

DIED — Jonathan Burris, 79, Little Rock, on Tuesday. — Russell Feeback, 50, Friday at Harrison Hospital. — Mrs. Mary Jane Ritchie, 84, Friday at Johnson Memorial Hospital. — Annette Cameron Moore, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Stewart Moore, Sunday. — A.A. Dale, 68, at his home Monday. — Miss Margaret McDaniel, 84, Thursday.

Thursday, November 10, 1921

The large two-story frame residence of T.H. Botts on the Upper Jackstown Pike, just outside of city limits, was

*See Memory lane, page 5

Letters from our readers

To The Carlisle Mercury:

I would like to speak out in regards to the wonderful job Community Action is doing. I am 89 years old living by myself. My house was in bad need of repair.

I think Community Action program is a great thing for the older people that need things done.

I wish to say thanks in the biggest way possible to each and everyone that is responsible for getting the work done. Specially the young men that did the job. They were all so polite and nice. They did a great job, my house is air tight, warm for the first time in several years. I am not hating to see winter. My appreciation is more than I can put in words.

Community Action Program is a wonderful thing. So I hope it will continue to operate.

Again thanks,
Sallie Dee Bowen
Route 4, Carlisle

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James C. Smith ..... Editor
[Mrs.] Katherine T. Fisher ..... Managing Editor
[Mrs.] Janie Duncan ..... Assistant-to-the-Publisher
[Mrs.] Libby J. Moss ..... CompuWriter Operator
[Mrs.] Ann Shearer ..... Receptionist

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NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION

Op-ed page

The paper chase . . . *or last one out the window is an optimist*

When I started my yo-yo factory, I wanted to be listed on Wall Street, so I'd be right in the swing of business trends there.

Wall Street, for your information, is a street in New York City where people have their backs to the wall and work themselves into a lather. To understand how Wall Street works, all you have to do is recall those television commericals for a major Wall Street brokerage firm, the ones that feature cattle.

It is not mere chance that the firm chose cattle as its symbol. If you have ever spent much time with cattle, you know they spend all their time making cattle messes and panicking.

The picture is pretty much the same on Wall Street, except herd members carry briefcases, litter the floor with paper because there aren't enough waste baskets to go around and practice having heart attacks. They act just like spooked cattle and for good reason: They are in the world's silliest business. Here's how it works:

Let's say my yo-yo company needs some money to keep up with expansion needs and future engineering costs. I print up a batch of pieces of paper, called "stocks" and go down to Wall Street to look around for some herd members to sell the paper.

"Hey, there, friends," I yell to the herd. "How would you like to own a piece of paper like this? Look at these features: It has an attractive border, three different colors of ink and many wonderful financial words such as 'accrual' and 'debenture' printed right on it."

The herd members are interested and shuffle around me for awhile waiting for the moon to change. Then, all of a sudden, one of them bolts the herd and rushes up to me and buys a piece of paper. The others get wild-eyed and stampede over each other to buy my pretty paper.

I shuffle off to Buffalo with bulging pockets and dreams of new equipment, pretty secretaries and my own personal executive washroom.

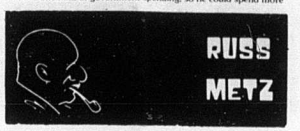
Gradually, the herd members come to their senses. They realize all they have is paper, which is utterly useless unless they can get other herd members to buy it, too. So they all end up simply trading paper back and forth, day after day, year after year, trying to make a profit on each deal so they can pay the mortgages on their ranch-style mansions in the suburbs.

Deep in their hearts, they know they are participating in a gigantic hoax that could collapse at any moment, so they have no place to go except out the nearest window. So any event, no matter how trivial, causes them to panic.

You can pick up the newspaper financial section any day and read stories like this: "New York-Stock market prices plunged sharply today as investors reacted to that President Reagan has a bunion on his left big toe."

So the market is always skittering up and down. When Reagan was elected, it skittered up for a while because Ron promised he would reduce government spending. This is obviously great news for Wall Street because the government is the street's major competitor in the business of peddling worthless pieces of paper.

But it turned out that what Ron really meant was he was going to reduce one kind of government spending, so he could spend more



money on the MX missile, the B-1 bomber, the cruise missile, the atomic dirigible, the Secret Decoder Ring and the Deadly Handy-Dandy Death Ray.

Once Wall Street realized what Ron had done, it worked itself into an even bigger panic than usual, screaming gloom, despair and agony on me.

"There you go again," Ron said to them, with a coy smile. It worked on Jimmy Carter as a great put-down. Then he mounted his cow pony and rode around the herd humming a soothing tune he learned in one of his western movies. And so the herd calmed down to graze on a few brightly-colored weeds and await the next stampede.

—RM—

Nobody knows the troubles poor folks have. Here are a few sentences from letters received by the Welfare Department in applications for welfare support:

✓I am forwarding my marriage certificate and six children. I have seven, but one died which was baptised on a half sheet of paper.

✓I cannot get sick pay. I have six children. Can you tell me why?

✓This is my eighth child. What are you going to do about it?

✓I am very much annoyed to find you have my son as illiterate. This is not true, as I was married a week before he was born.

✓My husband got his project cut off two weeks ago, and I haven't had any relief since then.

✓Unless I get my money pretty soon, I will be forced to lead an immortal life.

✓The lady next door has three children and gets assistance, and I have six children so I am twice as unfortunate as she is.

✓They want somebody to swear to my good moral character but they won't take my boy friend's word for it. If anybody should know, he should since we have been living together almost a year.

✓I want the money as quick as possible. I have been in bed with the doctor for two weeks and he doesn't do me no good. If things don't improve, I will have to send for another doctor.

—RM—

I am utterly amazed at the imagination and financial jerrymandering some of our money institutions have cooked up to get their fingers on your dough. It has come about through all this interest rate-raising that has resulted in all kinds of bizarre schemes.

You can't pick up a newspaper or turn on a television these days without seeing advertisements for these schemes.

"Attention Savers: If you invest in our New All Savers Money Market Fund Treasury Bond Certificates of Deposit, you can earn 23.6% interest, which, compounded hourly and during ocean tides, will yield an actualized semi-annual net deductible, pre-tax liquid return of 41.7%, although of course your mileage may vary due to altitudes. If you are found guilty of premature withdrawal, the federal government requires us to send people around to break your face, so be sure to thumb through the prospectus."

I have a lot of trouble understanding these schemes. When the interest rate soared past the 2 percent mark charged by my hometown loanshark, I lost track. He would charge only two dollars for every dollar he loaned—a simple, east-to-understand 2%.

So until I can take some kind of crash course on financial gobbledegook, I am investing my money in groceries and taxes. Anything I can put aside for investment is going into a cemetery plot with mineral rights.

Onward, upward.

An editor's random thoughts...

by Warren R. Fisher Sr.
October 28, 1937

Few bards has the grim, grey eleventh month to sing her coming or bewail her passing. Like a thief she comes, tearing the flaming finery of her departing sister into tatters, leaving bare branches etched against the leaden skies of her landscapes — cold, supplicating arms uplifted over the corpse of Summer dead...And so I sing November, dismal mortician for a Summer that is gone...The year grows old and cold and grey; death impends and the chill of fields white blanketed with the snow. And yet warmth remains under her sun; color yet lives in hues subdued in her weed fields, in her fields of corn, tented now like the camp of an army and gold-splotched with heaps of the ripened corn. Gorgeous and awesome oftimes are her sunsets of deep reds and slate greys and purples and her dawns are sparkling with the white of the hoar frost. There is a coziness about the approach of the winter season — if one is so fortunate as to have clothes and food, shelter and a fire upon the hearth — that brings a sense of comfortable and snug contentment. Let the winds roar and the clouds spit snow. For fires crackle cheerily; on the stove the kettle sings and November comes bearing creature comforts for our delectation — the rich mellow sweetness of golden sorghum, the flavor of the fields in baked kershaw and tawny pumpkin pie, the delights of fresh spareribs, of fat sausages, of snowy hominy and the refreshing tartness of crimson cranberries with turkey golden browned. Ah, not all delights have perished as the sun swings away and the cold winds begin to rattle the bare branches that only

*See Random thoughts, page 5

The Idle Rambler

by James C. Smith

"Comes the winter. In exact diametrical progression with the shortening of the days, do the residues of deceit manifest themselves upon the lineaments of the damned."

— Sir Thaddeus Barclay Fudpucker

It has been noted that comrade Janie Duncan and I are wearing our sunglasses at most inappropriate times lately. In fact, I have been asked why it is that we are seldom, if ever, seen without them on.

Let me say that it is no easy task to maneuver in the twilight hours through the colored world of Foster Grant. Yet 'tis a sacrifice we make for our profession.

You see, sunglasses are a basic tool of the trade for those in the newspaper profession: They cover our shifty eyes.

In particular, they hide those uncontrollable little shifts that tend to give us away when we, how shall I put it, lie. That is another of our professional hazards. And nervously shifting eyes always give it away.

A couple of examples:

— The other day I was confronted by a man who was madder than a wet hornet because I had completely distorted a statement he made in strictest confidence. Under pressure, I threw on my sunglasses and proceeded to give him the standard newspaperman's explanation.

"It was...shift...shift...a typographical error."

— An irate advertiser stormed into the office last week and demanded an explanation of how "in the name of great Caesar's ghost" we forgot to put an expiration date on coupons that gave a 50 percent discount on everything in his store.

"One moment while I go and check our log," Janie said with graceful confidence.

She walked straight back to her purse, whipped out her shades, and shyly crept back into the front office where the cursing was about to melt the artificial plants.

"I'm so sorry sir," she said through a comehither smile, but after I had made up the ad...shift...shift...a gang of Nazi frogmen burst into the back shop and forced our editor to tear the dates off."

"What?" the outraged advertiser screamed.

"Please don't worry, we'll make a correction next week, and that spineless editor has been fired."

"Fired?"

"Yes, we sent him packing as soon as we found out he wasn't willing to risk his life for Willard's Quality Emporium. This will never happen again sir."

"Fired," he now said with a smile. "I suppose everything will be OK then."

Surely you can now see why we are always wearing sunglasses. It has gotten so bad lately, that I've taken to putting them on before answering the phone at home.

I wonder if I can take them off my taxes next year. Seems like a legitimate business expense to me.

— JCS —

Do you have a dog that needs to be told twice to get off the couch?

Does your canary broadcast birdseed across the kitchen floor?

And your cat. Does it caterwaul for Special Kitty Treat at 52 cents a can, then stalk off disdainfully, leaving the food untouched?

Don't worry. These things are good for your health. A recent report from the International Conference on the Human-Companion Animal Bond, held in Philadelphia, assures that pets can lower your blood pressure.

Talking to your dog, (not to mention kicking your cat) can be soothing, if not educational. And many of us have known for years that watching fish in a bowl is better than taking depressant drugs.

The fact is, pets are big business in the United States. More than half the households in the nation include pets. The numbers are gigantic — 48 million dogs, 27 million cats, 25 million birds, and other untold millions of goldfish, gerbils, ghila monsters, gopher snakes and poodles (notice I listed poodles last — I hate them).

Yes, pets can be a pleasure — and their companionship can even be good for your social life. Researchers say those who walk dogs are more likely to draw greetings from their neighbors — and perhaps an invitation to come in for a drink — than those trudging along alone.

How's about that for a report? I think this column is beginning to go to the dogs! (Boo!)

Nou carborundum illegitimi

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GENUINE DIAMOND 14 KARAT GOLD-FILLED JEWELRY OR MEN'S/WOMEN'S 5-FUNCTION LCD WATCH
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MEN'S/WOMEN'S 5-FUNCTION *Ultra Thin* LCD WATCH (Yellow or White Finish)
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MEN'S ONLY 12-FUNCTION LCD WATCH w/Backup Light, Time Zone & Music Alarm (Yellow or White Finish)
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IT'S EASY AS 1,2,3...
1. SHOP With us every week. This exclusive jewelry and watch offer is only one of the many values you'll find in our store.
2. PUNCH Your special punch card (available at the checkout) every time you purchase $5.00 in groceries, excluding beer, wine, and tobacco products.
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SPECIAL BONUS!
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