Blogging in the Classroom

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You don’t need to be a blogger to use blogs in the classroom

http://profalbrecht.wordpress.com
Why Blogging?

Static Website
- One Way Communication
- Lecture Style
- Teacher decides what information is passed on
- Students disconnected - not involved

Blog
- Dialogue
- Collaboration
- Reflection
- Connection
- Creation
- Students “own” learning
- Learning Community

http://langwitches.org/blog/2008/09/14/blogs-vs-static-websites/
4 Classroom Blog Uses

One-way communication from prof to class

Prof blogs provocatively, students react via blog comments

Students write blog posts to own blog or group blog

Students read blog posts, either discuss in class or write commentaries
3 Types of Blog Posts

Information (news)

Commentaries (editorials)

Lifestyle (welcome to my life)
Stark Presents Bribing the States to Tax Food Today at NYU

Kirk J. Stark (UCLA) presents Bribing the States to Tax Food and The Federal Role in State Tax Reform, 30 Va. Tax Rev. ___ (2010), at NYU today as part of its Colloquium Series on Tax Policy and Public Finance convened by Daniel Shaviro (NYU) and Mayor DiMaso (Harvard Business School). Here is the abstract of the latter paper:

During the most recent economic downturn, state and local governments have experienced fiscal imbalances of a magnitude not seen since the Great Depression. The principal cause of the current state fiscal crisis is the profound macroeconomic shock of 2008-2009. Yet macroeconomic conditions alone cannot explain the historic decline in state tax receipts over the past few years. As various commentators have noted, state tax structures developed over the past century have become hyper-sensitive to cyclical variability in the economy, with tax receipts exhibiting greater volatility than warranted by changes in underlying economic conditions. This article considers the federal government’s role in promoting the adoption of volatile state tax structures. Through various inducements and limitations embedded in federal law, the federal government has subsidized the debt in favor of state revenue volatility, unwittingly exacerbating the subnational fiscal crises that it is then called upon to mitigate through bailouts and general fiscal. The article considers various options for reforming the federal government’s policy toward taxes, ranging from a more neutral federal stance toward state tax design to policies that would favor the adoption of more stable revenue sources by state and local governments.
GOP Tax Leaders Side With Obama, Oppose Cantor’s Repatriation Tax Holiday

Following up on yesterday’s post, Administration, GOP Spar Over Repatriation Tax Holiday: Bloomberg, Republican Tax Chiefs Cool to Cisco, Google Offshore Tax Plan:

The top Republican tax writers in the U.S. Congress aren’t endorsing a call by Cisco, Google and other multinational corporations for a temporary tax break on repatriating profits held offshore.

Representative Dave Camp, the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, and Senator Orrin Hatch, the top Republican on the Finance Committee, said through aides yesterday that they want to consider the repatriation issue as part of a comprehensive look at rewriting the U.S. tax code.

That puts Camp, Hatch, and another Ways and Means member, Representative Patrick Tiberi, in the middle of a political fight with more than $1 trillion at stake. On one side are the companies and House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, a Virginia Republican who backs a so-called tax holiday for repatriated profits even while Congress considers a broader overhaul. On the other side is the U.S. Treasury Department, which yesterday criticized the idea, calling it a mistake that would benefit only a narrow slice of businesses.

March 24, 2011 in Congressional News, Tax | Permalink | Comments (0) | TrackBack (0)

Omaha Mayor Proposes Federal Toilet Paper Tax to Fund Local Sewer Project

Omaha World-Herald: settle Unrolls Toilet Paper Tax:

Mayor Jim Suttle went to Washington Tuesday flush with ideas for how federal officials could help cities like Omaha pay for multibillion-dollar sewer projects.

Among the items on his brainstorming list: a proposal for a 10-cent federal tax on every roll of toilet paper you buy. Based on the four-pack price for Charmin double rolls Tuesday at a midtown Hy-Vee, such a tax would add more than 10 percent to the per-roll price, pushing it over a buck.

The idea came from a failed 2009 House measure by an Oregon congressman to help cities and the environment. “I heard about it and said, ‘Well, this is simple. Let’s put it on the table,’” said Suttle. “It doesn’t mean I endorse it.”
"Convergence Flaws" v. Convergence Spin

I recently read the transcripts of two recent speeches on the question of the future of IFRS in the US. They are as different as two speeches could be on this topic.

As one might expect, the adopt-IFRS-or-the-sky-will-fall speech emanated from David Tweedie, the IASB Chair. It should also come as no surprise that he gave it in a protective bubble: a meeting of the freest-spending corporate lobbying group in Washington – the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. To those tone-deaf-to-investors ears, Tweedie must have sounded like a Bach chorale. But, I wonder how many of those Dodd-Frank and fair value bashers actually understand (or care) that GAAP and IFRS will be far from converged even after the frantic race to the bottom on leasing, financial instruments and revenue recognition has been declared fini in just a few months. Here's a quick list off the top of my head of projects that were abandoned, never fully addressed or mutilated by "convergence" (feel free to add your own):

- Impairment of long-lived assets
- Research and development costs
- Borrowing costs
- Pensions
- Financial statement presentation, statement of cash flows and disclosures
- Contingent liabilities
- Business combinations
- Joint ventures
- Oil and gas accounting
- Agriculture
- Goodwill impairment

I wonder how many of Tweedie's audience understand (or care) that rigorous SEC enforcement of IFRS will result in only "soft-touch" enforcement elsewhere in the world will only make us out to be chumps.
Building an emergency fund

My first financial goal that I need to meet in 2011 is to build an emergency fund for myself. My plans to buy a house would completely derail this fund, as I would need to use all of my cash, plus cash in my mutual funds, in order to pay closing costs and buy appliances, etc.

I recently read this article, about how only a little over half of Americans have more in their emergency funds than the balance of their credit card debt. The article doesn't say, of the Americans with more money in their funds than they owe in credit cards, whether those emergency funds are even sufficient to cover emergencies. A $500 fund is not going to cut it if you have to get some major car repairs in order to keep your car running and get to work.

Personally, my credit card debt right this minute is about $1,000 ($600 is reimbursable expenses from work), and my cash balance is about $4,000, so at least I am breaking even there. However, my funds available for "emergencies" is still not as high as I'd like.

Right now, my rent is only $325/month, I don't have a family to support or pay medical bills for, I have parents that I could move back in with on short notice if I lost my job. So, I would be fine with an emergency fund of $5,000 or $6,000.

If I owned a house, not only would the purchase use up all of my cash, but I would really require a larger emergency fund to cover the new emergencies I could be responsible for as a homeowner, such as leaking pipes or a broken A/C.

So, the only reason I would consider buying a home now is that interest rates are so favorable, plus I have parents that could bail me out if I needed a short term loan to cover costs like that. I was also planning on having renters pay me enough to make my portion of the monthly mortgage payment even less than my rent now. Still, it's a scary idea because it risks such a lot of money.
Friday Bodyspeak

I heard it. "Call and cancel all my appointments! I just can't do it today. This is non-negotiable."

It had been a while since my body spoke up. Except for a few minor grumblings, there have been no major complaints since that red hot hot hot chili back in early September. I stalled for time, "I'll get right back to you."

Tried to start the engine, but only heard coughing and sputtering. Not enough juice in the battery to turn it over.

Started through the diagnostic checklist from the top.

Brain? Dead. The computer is on but the screen is blank.

Tummy? Tummy? Tummy? No
So, what will it be?
Examples of useful blogs

Accounting:
- The Accounting Cycle
- The Accounting Onion
- re:Balance
- re: The Auditors
- Sara McIntosh
- White Collar Fraud

Tax & fraud
- Accounting Tomorrow
- Bed buffaloes in your tax code
- Confessions of a CPA
- ConvergenceCoaching, LLC Inspired Ideas
- Don't Mess With Taxes
- Even a Nerd Can Be Heard
- Golden Practices
- Growing Without Rain aka NCTaxPro
- Linda Keith CPA
- Roth & Company PC
- Tax Resolution
- Taxable Talk
- The Missouri "taxguy"
- The Tax CPA
- The TaxGirl
- THE WANDERING TAX PRO
- THRIVEal
- Tick Marks

There are several more. Check the links page of The Summa for another great list.