

TURMOIL IN GRANT WORLD



DOWNTOWN MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT By Barry Cassidy

These are interesting times if you make your money providing public finance, like I do. I have an EPA Environmental Justice application pending. It is a good application, but you never know if they want to review all applications over \$50,000; mine is \$150,000. If we get the money, it will mean we met the Trump criteria.

How can I shepherd it through? I need to wait.

The upheaval creates opportunities, as I noted in a previous article (January 2025 issue) about agencies being eliminated. Reagan did much of the same. His programs were relatively straightforward.

I worked as a temporary worker for the PA Department of Labor and Industry when I was already accepted to the Carnegie Mellon School of Urban and Public Affairs (SUPA). I needed someone to lay me off to collect unemployment while I went to school.

Wheeling Pittsburgh Steel had two facilities at the time, one in Monessen and one in Allenport in the Monongahela Valley (Mon Valley). The Japanese had dumped steel exports, leaving everyone in Pittsburgh unemployed.

A trade complaint occurred, and the federal government paid trade readjustment assistance (TRA) to affected people. They were also entitled to TAA, which was companion job training.

In all this upheaval, I saw the head of

the Auto Union stand up and say he was for the tariff as it would bring auto jobs back to Detroit. Since 2008, the auto industry has not been pretty. A comeback for the auto workers made me think of the steelworkers I processed in the 1980s.

This was the aftermath of Jimmy Carter, and I started to wonder if it would have made a difference when it became apparent that someone was trying to destroy our manufacturing base. If he had acted like Trump, would that industry collapse as it did? They were retooling by installing a state-of-the-art continuous caster, which was underused and abandoned.

We import significantly more to many of these countries, and they strive to maintain their own industries. Therefore, when they impose reciprocal tariffs, there isn't much to reciprocate with.

The fall of the steel industry saw their work become intermittent. Workers would work a week and then be off for two weeks, and they had to come into the office. Combine that with Corning Glass working 15-hour weeks, and it got pretty crowded in the Charleroi office.

Here is a clear example of how things can look one way but be something else entirely. So, the year before, the steelworkers were out of work, totally laid off for a little over a year. Unemployment was awarded for 26 weeks. A federal program called Extended Benefits, which added an additional 10 weeks, allowed you to collect your benefits. Then, afterward, two 13-week extensions were added, which meant that in a 52-week year, you could collect unemployment for 62 weeks.

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ABOUT ME

Breanna Angstadt is a Certified Integrative Nutrition Health Coach, Life Coach, NLP Master Practitioner & Personal Trainer.

Breanna spent most of her life overweight, diet hopping whilst battling eating disorders. After many years of trial & error, seeking help & transforming her mindset, she not only surpassed her health & fitness goals, but then went on to inspire others to transform their own lives. After founding the successful Just B Whole Body & Wellness Coaching, Breanna has used her experience, education & intuition to coach women around the world transform their mindset as well as their physique.

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- Everything you do (or don't do) revolves around your weight.
- You're tired & defeated but you're still willing to do what it take to lose weight & be DONE.
- You're ready to try something different so that you have different results.

Being overweight isn't your "problem". Being overweight is a **SYMPTOM** or a byproduct of a **problem** you're not addressing or perhaps not even aware of.

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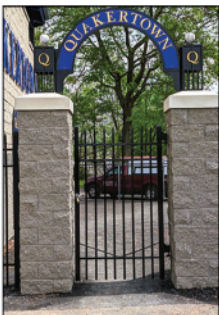
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DOWNTOWN MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT

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Then, they announced the trade readjustment program and told people they were eligible to collect a year's worth of benefits. So, they all came back, and the program was different; instead of the last four digits of the social security number, the first three were used. Everyone was local and had the same first three digits because that was the area identifier for where the number was given.

It was a significant administrative hassle looking for the middle set of numbers, and all existing records were the last four. So, nothing coincided, and we had to open claims for everyone without real cross-references for anything we did.

There were weeks of angry, laid-off men signing up, giving birth to a new documentation set. Then we found that the money was for the year; they had collected 62 weeks in a 52-week year. So, no one got anything, except we generated a boatload of administrative dollars and paid my salary.

Big announcements and no real value. I accomplished my goal and got laid off.

My point here is that no matter what you read or what is announced, you have to take it with a grain of salt. Some

people call it government red tape; I call it nonsense.

I go to some of these grant meetings and see that people do not have a good project; they are salary prospecting. Things needed to change, and it seems like they are. I do not like not getting money, but I can certainly appreciate their effort.

Barry Cassidy is a freelance grant and economic development consultant. He can be reached at barrycassidy@comcast.net.

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