

U LIFE MAY THE CASH BE WITH YOU

EVER FEEL SORRY FOR GI Joe? Yeah, GI Joe was there all right: being hurled off buildings, drowned and tested for flammability.

If we'd known in the early '80s that the action figure would be worth up to \$300 today, would we have gone easier on old Joe? Probably not. But now we can rummage through the toys we didn't torch for some quick cash.

Jim Bernard, a junior at the U. of Texas, Austin, preserved his childhood by storing his GI Joe action figures and putting protective plastic covers over his old comic books. "I wanted to save my Joe toys to give to my kids so they may enjoy them also," he says. "But I'm planning to sell the comic books when I need the money."

The toys and trinkets we used and abused as children have found a

niche in the collector's hall of fame, and it's not just Joe. "Star Wars was the fire that started the toy-collecting craze," says Bill San, manager of the Puzzle Zoo in Santa Monica, Calif. "It was the first line that was mass marketed."

Some of the high-ticket items at the collectibles shop include a Sonic Controlled Land Speeder (\$500), Cloud City play set (\$225) and a light saber replica signed by Mark Hamill (Luke Skywalker) that sells for more than \$1,000.

View Masters, Pez dispensers, Swatch watches and lunch boxes are a few other nostalgic items that collectors are snapping up in the '90s. But before you make plans to pay off next year's tuition with your Smurf collection, it's best to check their value in trade magazines so you don't get ripped off.

Collector bibles like *Warman's Americana & Collectibles*, *Action Figure News & Toy Review* and *Amazing Figures* give prices and guidelines for would-be collectors and sellers.

Junk, however, is still junk. Despite the revival of Daisy Duke short-shorts, the Dukes of Hazzard lunch box will net you only \$10. Pac-Man fever, however, is still raging in collecting circles. The metal lunch box sporting that famous ghost chomper is worth about \$40.

So don't plan on striking gold with every retro-tique in the attic. The current price tag of \$120 for Remco's 1978, 12-inch energized Batman action figure may be encouraging, but Mattel's Masters of the Universe 6-inch He-Man figure (\$10) will barely pay for a used CD.

Now that it's big money for little toys, all we can do is pray for the day that vinyl records and Garfield books make a comeback.

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THE DAILY DOWNLOAD

IN THE REALM OF COLLEGE NEWSPAPERS, IT'S ALL THE NEWS THAT'S FIT TO download. To date, more than 75 college publications have expanded to include on-line versions of their newspapers, and the number is growing rapidly as the information superhighway spins an even bigger Web.

Why the expansion from broad sheet to byte? Cost is one factor: "For smaller newspapers, the biggest expense is newsprint and distribution," says Marshall Miller, a junior at Brown U. and executive editor of the *Brown Daily Herald*. Being on the Web broadens circulation without the added expense of print.

"College students have the time, the knowledge and the freedom to try new things, and there are few barriers to their creative freedom," says Jeff Boulter, a senior at Bucknell U. in Pennsylvania and editor in chief of *The Bucknellian*, which jumped on the Web in 1994.

TECH

The story of *The Bucknellian's* on-line version is fairly typical: Initially, the newspaper was available through Gopher, a clumsy Internet tool that limited the paper to a text-only format. Then the newspaper was placed on the Web, which, with the addition of pictures and graphics, made it more user-friendly.

The new audience for college newspapers ranges from students and alumni to random Web surfers. "It's a little frightening to think that someone across the globe can read about what's going on at school just as easily as one of my classmates can," says Karen Apollo, a senior at Cornell U. "But as long as I have a paper copy of the *Sun* to keep me busy during lecture, I guess there's no harm in going on-line."

For those who fear that their campuses will become just another truck stop on the information superhighway, some editors have a more positive outlook.

"The college campus as a separate and secluded entity is a prehistoric notion," says Charles Ratliff, a grad student and editor in chief of *The Summer Wildcat* at the U. of Arizona. "The traditional campus will continue to be replaced by a more global and virtual one.... The move to on-line newspapers is only part of a much larger trend, and a good one at that."

Good or bad, there remains much room for growth. Currently, most on-line papers are simply pared-down electronic editions of the original paper versions; they typically have all text and few or no photos. Unlike print editions, however, publications on the Web offer the bonus of linked sources, which allow immediate access to various Web sites, newspaper archives and school homepages.

So what exactly does the future hold? On-line papers will probably evolve into DIY publishing — Web users will designate, point by point, the exact content of the news or information they wish to receive rather than settle for the broad, standardized matter chosen by others.

But whether students and their publications are able to remain the creative spinners of the Web — or are destined to become entangled in it — has yet to be decided. Stay logged on.

Brian Salsberg, Harvard U./Illustration by Stacy Holmstedt, Arizona State U.

Check out our list of must-see college papers at: <http://www.umagazine.com>

POP

Valley of the Dolls? Barbie and friends are riding high in the collectibles market.

