

Oh, my cod!

The \$14.95 fish fry is here, thanks to weak dollar, hot market for Icelandic fish

By **SCOTT WILLIAMS**

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An ailing economy that has seen price increases at gas pumps and grocery stores now is hitting consumers where it really hurts: the Friday fish fry.

Fish fry operators throughout the Milwaukee area say the rising cost of fish and other products is hurting the profitability of their wildly popular Friday night dinners.

Especially hard hit are those restaurants that depend on Icelandic cod, a perennial favorite that has jumped 50% in cost because of the depressed value of the U.S. dollar.

Some fish fry operators are holding down their prices for fear of losing customers, while others have tried switching to a cheaper variety of fish.

One that has taken the plunge and boosted its prices is Serb Hall in Milwaukee, which serves 1,000 or

more fish dinners each week.

"Everybody is going to notice because everybody is watching their nickels and dimes."

Laurie Glencke,
VFW Post 8834
hall manager

Serb Hall management is asking customers to swallow a nearly 60% price increase, from \$9.50 to \$14.95 for the standard fish fry. Officials have posted a special notice in menus, explaining to customers that they have experienced "record-breaking price increases."

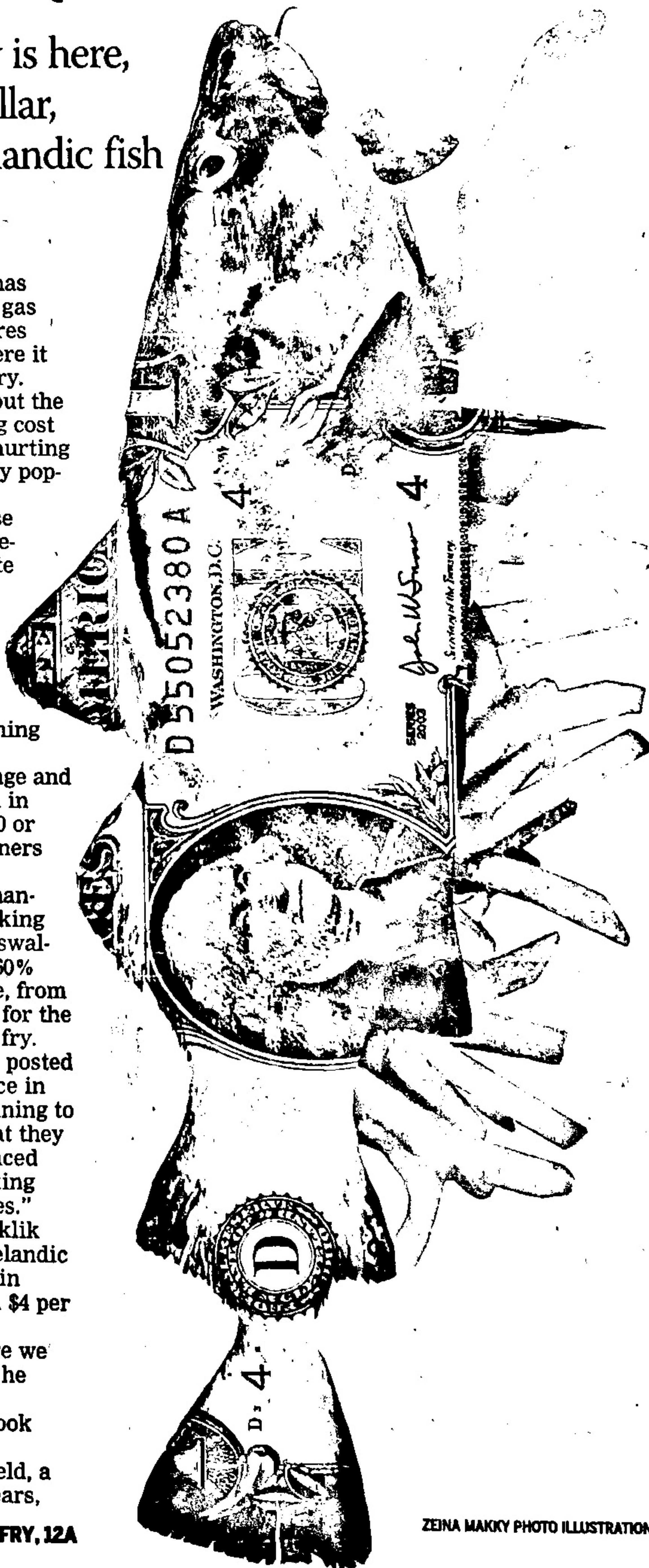
General manager John Cwiklik said the wholesale price of Icelandic cod has jumped dramatically in recent months, from less than \$4 per dinner to \$6.

"It spiked to the point where we couldn't handle it any more," he said.

Serb Hall's price increase took effect about a month ago.

Carol Dirnbauer of Brookfield, a Serb Hall regular for many years,

Please see **FISH FRY, 12A**



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