

## **THE IDLE AMERICAN**

**Accept All Cookies....**

**Commentary by Dr. Don Newbury**

**Column #1,081 for Release Week of March 4, 2024, or Later**

**We are** among the dwindling few who still answer the doorbell when it chimes between sunup and sunset. (If we don't hear it, we can rely 100% on our new rescue dog, Archie, to "bark" an alert.)

Oh, it's not quite that simple. First, we use the peephole to see who is seeking entry. If the person is exceedingly short, the visitor may be a Girl Scout. I figure I can hold my own with her, knowing her mom is likely nearby, fading into the background after pressing the bell button.

When it rang recently, I was reading details of AT&T's "make it right" email, noticing an option in the small print to "accept all cookies."....

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**Wouldn't you** know it? A charming eight-year-old, smartly outfitted in her Girl Scout uniform, was there to lighten her load of Girl Scout cookies. Sure enough, there was her mother nearby, smiling broadly. Usually, I buy a couple of boxes of Thin-Mints, feeling less guilty when chomping down on a snack with "thin" in its name. However, the AT&T ad kicked in, and I thought of the "accept all cookies" option.

"Why don't I just take one of each flavor?" I suggested. "Great," she replied, "I'll need to get 'em from the car." I didn't realize there are a dozen flavors. At \$4 per box, that pretty much uses up a 50-dollar bill.

If you're curious, current flavors in our neck of the woods include Samoas, Thin-Mints, Lemonades, Toffee-Tastic, Caramel Chocolate Chip, Peanut Butter Patties, Dosidos, Adventurefuls, S'mores, Lemon-Ups, Toast-Yay! and Trefoils. (Perhaps the AT&T "make it right" email softens my "budget blow.")....

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**The AT&T** apology, if you haven't heard, was offered to customers who may have been inconvenienced by a service breach that spanned but a few hours. Viewed positively, the gesture goes well beyond what might be expected.

When's the last time you recall any reduction in billing by other utilities?

It's not even an "apples and oranges" comparison, but a century or so ago, most utilities--as well as companies of all sizes--gave little thought to token gifts, apologetic or not....

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**I can't** shake the idea that Cross Plains, Texas, bank directors got into a minor scuffle more than a century ago when they argued over whether to provide paper cups for customers who "dipper-dipped" water from the bank lobby bucket. "A dipper and bucket are good enough at home, and they're good enough at the bank," one of the directors is said to have argued, but was later outvoted....

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On the subject of "free stuff," that's what Energy Worldnet, Inc. (EWN) is offering to one lucky winner on the Internet. The lone prize is a "mystery box of swag." The contest has minimal requirements, merely asking participants to "follow us"... "like this post"... and "tag a friend."

Hundreds have entered, and entries continue to pour in. (I'm not sure what "swag" is, but the dictionary definition seems clear: "a noun identifying a curtain or piece of fabric fastened so as to hang in a drooping curve.")

For readers who don't know about Energy Worldnet, its website provides detailed information. "The company offers platforms for managing workplaces and accessing information--particularly for employee training, certifications, evaluation data, supply chain management, regulatory compliance, consulting and enterprise management--on a global scale."....

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**That's a** mouthful, or perhaps better described, a "paragraphful." And, you, too, can enter. You may be running short on swag, or conversely, may have so much of the stuff that you need a box to put it in. After all, those old cigar boxes we used to store miscellaneous items in are hard to come by.

Whatever, I intend to enter the contest, as well as provide this free column publicity for a firm that seems to be spanning the globe.

Should I win, I'll brag about it--explaining, in detail--exactly what I have won. I can always use additional stuff to hang from drooping curves....

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**Dr. Newbury, longtime university president, public speaker and author, has written a weekly column since 2003.**