

Cutler Bay NEWS

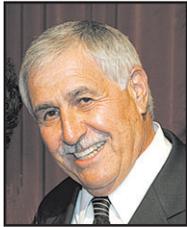
OCT. 28 - NOV. 10, 2014

communitynewspapers.com

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While waiting forever in line, I ponder: Why me?

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There must be something wrong with me. Whenever I go into a bank or drive-up teller, all I usually do is put money into the bank or take some out. In either case it takes just a few moments and I am on my way.

What in blazes is the person ahead of me doing that seems to take forever? There simply isn't that much to do in a bank. The same goes for Taco Bell, Wendy's, MacDonald's or any other fast food restaurant.

When I step up to the window I usually order Nos. 1, 2 or 7, and possibly ask whether they include a drink or not. That is all the conversation that I find necessary. Again, what are the people ahead of me doing that requires 10 minutes of dialogue with such a simple choice to be made?

Being a consumer is now becoming quite a burden. I recently went to a large store that promises to offer brand name merchandise in a mart. I won't name the store but I recently spent an inordinate amount of time making a simple purchase and trying to check out with one of the two cashiers handling the entire flow of customers at that particular time.

You are required to stand behind a little yellow line and wait for a cashier to become available. Heaven forbid you cross to another line. I waited patiently to make my purchase while the woman ahead of me went through her entire wallet full of credit cards, none of which seemed to work. When she finally got to one that would go through her husband came running over with something to add.

This started the whole process all over again. Once completed I thought to myself — soon it will be my turn — at which point



(Cartoon by Bitstrips)

her husband left and came back with one more item to add.

I suggested to him that there were other people waiting to check out. My comments had no effect whatsoever. This one time I did have a very complicated transaction and, for once, I was going to be the one tying up the checkout line.

You see I just got a \$60 credit for returned items and was purchasing a new item for \$80. The cashier said that I now hold \$87. I tried very hard to explain to her that that would be impossible but she insisted that that is what the machine said. I suggested she get a supervisor involved, which she was finally able to do and explain to her that the difference between 80 and 60 could not be more than 80.

I was finally on my way. After swearing to never return to this store again I broke my promise and went there the following week to make another purchase. This time, I got in line behind some guy who had to make a phone call to straighten out his credit problems or whatever. The cashier, rather than direct him to another location, allowed him to the tie up that phone and her position for well over 20 minutes while she did nothing as he babbled into the phone.

I suggested that perhaps he be moved to another phone but evidently that was not in the cards. I patiently (Hah!) waited and then finally left.

That same day I was directed to an additional cashier at another location in the store. When I approached her to pay for my purchase she said just a minute went away and took a personal call and blabbed for what seemed like a very long time and finally returned to allow me to leave the store. I did complain to the store manager but I somehow doubt that he alone will be able to correct the problem.

My next thought was perhaps buying things in stores is not the way to go any longer, so I turned to the Internet. I use a software program which has become a real drag on my patience and called the manufacturer of this software to help. I got the same answer that I have been getting a lot lately.

"This product is not compatible with Windows 8.1. It seems that virtually nothing is compatible with Windows 8.1. Good work Microsoft! I was directed to a website where I could order a new version of this software by simply clicking a button. I clicked and clicked and clicked and continually got messages telling me to wait.

They must have known it was me because no one has ever been asked to wait while placing an online order. I finally gave up after a great deal of searching and located a telephone number and attempted to get through the interminable voicemail to actually speak to a person. When I did they referred me to another phone number to place an order which is what I tried to do in the first place. I finally reached a speaking human being and told her what I wanted to order. They promised that it would eventually be shipped to me. As of this writing I have yet to receive it but as I said earlier I am a very patient man.