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Saying 'thank you' is no problem

A helping of gratitude for readers, colleagues on Thanksgiving

Jon Yates

What's Your Problem?

November 27, 2008

The Problem Solver has a lot thankful for this year:

Thank you to the readers of this column, who are the kindest and most generous people around.

When the Problem Solver asked for help, you responded in staggering numbers. More than 400 of you sent in converter box coupons to donate to readers who need them, and the coupons continue to pour in.

One of you purchased a converter box and sent that in. Others sent cash and asked that I forward it on to needy readers, and one person sent in two phone cards. The response has been so overwhelming, the Problem Solver could not keep up on his own.

So a special **thank you** goes to his co-worker Cynthia Jordan, who has helped this column in more ways than you can imagine. If you received converter boxes from the Problem Solver this fall, it was Cynthia who sent them to you.

A hearty **thank you** as well to the many other readers who chipped in, including Mary Anne Boehm, who was moved to action by the Oct. 23 column featuring Rev. Dan Brandt.

Brandt and his congregation, Nativity of Our Lord Church, were scammed out of \$1,225 by a Florida T-shirt company. Earlier this month, Boehm donated six cartons of dark green T-shirts to Brandt, emblazoned with a picture of the Bridgeport church.

"I'm so happy this could happen," Boehm said. "When I first saw the story in the paper, I knew I wanted to do something."

To ensure that Brandt got the shirts, Boehm called a family friend, former [Chicago Bears](#) running back Ronnie Bull, who runs a sports memorabilia and T-shirt company. The two worked together to produce and pay for 300 shirts.

"They're beautiful," Brandt said. "They're nicer than I would have gotten originally."



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The generosity did not end there. The church also received \$300 in donations from What's Your Problem? readers. That money will be placed in the church's food pantry fund, Brandt said.

Perhaps the response should not be surprising. Readers of this column have a history of helping out. In February, the Problem Solver wrote about the Midwest Brain Injury Clubhouse, a Chicago non-profit that had trouble getting a refund from a fundraising organization. The Problem Solver sends a **thank you** to readers who donated about \$2,000 to the clubhouse. Three fundraising consultants also offered free help to the clubhouse.

Many of you weren't particularly sympathetic to the two women featured in an April column. A church gave away fur coats but did not have any for the women, who were large in stature. A special **thank you** to two readers who donated plus-size fur coats to the women.

Thank yous also are in order for the Citizens Utility Board, the Better Business Bureau, the Illinois attorney general's office, and all the other agencies that toil on behalf of consumers who have gotten the runaround.

The Problem Solver would be remiss if he did not say **thank you** to all the spokespeople, bureaucrats, business owners and city, county, state and federal employees who fielded his calls this year. Your dedication to righting wrongs helped readers out of countless bad situations and difficult times.

A heartfelt **thank you** to the handful of you who offered to clean up the Problem Solver's desk, after seeing a picture of the mess in the Aug. 31 edition. In the spirit of the season, the Problem Solver has begun the task of cleaning it up on his own. He hopes to complete the process by next Thanksgiving.

Finally, **thank you**, dear readers, for your kind notes throughout the year, for your praise and critiques, and for continuing to read the column. Here's hoping you have a happy—and problem-free—Thanksgiving.

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