By Nancy Whitaker

JUST SAYING NO

Yes. I did it again. I am a big sucker for the items they advertise on TV that you just can't live without. In the past, I have purchased egg peelers, microwave spaghetti cookers, shavers, car covers, ice scrapers with gloves, salad shooters, grinders, and battery operated rodent frighteners.

I have bought tanning blankets made of foil material, a fan that you stick in your car window and it was supposed to run while you weren't in your car to cool it off.

Yes. I have tried lots of new items, but let me be the first to say that they are not all as good as what they claim to be.

My latest escapade with TV shopping and infomercials happened just this week when I saw on a commercial that there was a new pillow for sale. The pillow was just what I thought I could use because, if you sit down at your job a lot, this pillow relieves and prevents back pain. It sounded just too good to be true, so I just had to have one.

Finally, I got the telephone number from the TV and called to order my pillow. When I got the pillow company on the phone, it was an automated lady's voice. Instead of punching your phone keypad, you had to state your response.

The robotic voiced lady asked me to state my name, address and inquired if I wanted to order the pillow. I said, "Yes ma'am." So then she asked for my credit card number and for me to state it clearly which I did. I thought, "Ok, we're done."

Was I ever wrong! Of course, if you ordered right that moment, you could get two pillows and just pay shipping on the second one. I thought, perhaps someone else could use a pillow or maybe I could use one at work and another one at home. “Ok,” I said.

“Now we are done,” I thought again! The automated voice continued “We have another special offer for you.” I quickly said, “No!!!”

I may as well saved my voice, because once I refused an offer, they just continued with more. They offered me everything from a trip to the Bahamas to a WalMart gift card, but of course I had to pay for them; and don’t forget they already had my credit card number.

This went on for ten minutes. The more offers the stupid robot made to me, the louder I screamed, “NO!” Finally, my husband said, “Just hang up.”

I screamed, “I can’t. They have my credit card number.”

After hollering, “No,” for a very long time, I finally was able to get rid of the annoying voice on the other end of the phone.

However, I was very concerned that the automated voice had not understood my shouting of, “No. No. No.”

I was very frustrated so, I called the same number again and this time I just stayed on the line. Lo and behold, I got a live person. It was customer service.

I started off by telling her, “You guys are shameless. I tried to order a pillow and after 15 minutes of trying to tell your automated system I did not want any of your other offers, I am not sure what I got. Can you help me?”? The customer service lady said, “Yes we do have those

offers when anyone calls. However, I cannot pull up your order now or do anything about it. You will have to wait 24 hours and go check our website to see what you are getting. If you do not want the order then you can cancel it."

At that point I was getting a little concerned, but I said, "Ma'am, I still want the pillow!"

The next day I went online to the company's website and found my order. I checked and even though it turned out to be $20 more than what I expected, I am supposed to get at least two pillows and who knows, perhaps four?

Oh, the woes of people like me who order and have to try each new gimmick that comes along. Well, let me say one thing, "My sitter-end better be comfortable and appreciate the efforts I made to get that pillow."

Do you like the TV infomercials? Have you ever tried any of their products? How many pillows do you think I will get? Let me know and I'll give you a Penny for Your Thoughts.