

# BOOK DESIGN NEWS

Fall 1995

"TODAY'S KNOWLEDGE IS TOMORROW'S FOUNDATION!"

VOLUME III • ISSUE II

CELEBRATING TWENTY YEARS IN BOOK DESIGN

## WHAT'S NEW

• **WWW Home Page.** Stop by and say "hi." Check out my famous potato chip recipe and learn about Vermont. What more could you want?!

• I recently had the honor and privilege of designing and composing *Audrey Grant's Better Bridge* series of bridge books. The books are published by Centennial Press (an imprint of Cliffs Notes) and there are four books in the series. The books focus on the four main elements of the game of bridge: *Basics*, *Bidding*, *Play*, and *Defense*. I have been playing bridge for twenty-five years and Audrey brings a new and refreshing approach to teaching the game.

Audrey Grant has worked with the World Bridge Federation to train bridge teachers from around the world. Audrey and her spouse, David, are currently touring the country promoting her new books.

Whether you are a beginning bridge player or a club champion, you will find these books will only enhance your game. Look for Audrey Grant appearing in a city near you!

Your bid!

**Web Presence.** I am now on the web and you can visit my home page at <http://www. Dover.net/~hammer>. My past newsletters are available to either download or read on-line, using Adobe Acrobat Reader, and you can leave messages while visiting as well. I'll be bringing some fun and exciting elements to the page in the near future and I look forward to your feedback.

**Some Do It For The Money.** Two questions, that's all it takes. To really find out everything you need to know about someone's passion for their work, ask them these two questions:

- If you didn't have to work for a living, would you continue doing what you do?
- If you knew you weren't going to be paid for what you do today, would you still do it?

The point is, too many people are driven by the *economical* result of an action rather than the *effective* result of that action. I would like to see how many college athletes would pursue a professional athletic career if they knew they would only make \$10,000 a year for the first five years.

I was visiting with the owner of a high-end typesetting company recently when we were interrupted by one of the compositors. This operator showed where the publisher of the manuscript she was working on had inadvertently made a mistake in editing. The mistake occurred on nearly every page of the manuscript, and in some cases several times per page. Knowing that this was an obvious error, the operator asked if she should either make the correction herself or call the publisher. I was shocked when the owner told her to set the type as shown and they will charge the customer for corrections. What?! I couldn't believe my ears! I knew right then and there that this company was only in it for the money.

A few issues back, I wrote about my belief in "form follows function." This was another case where the *function* was to make money and the daily

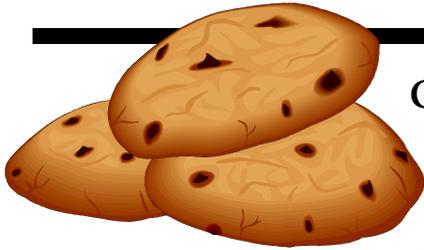
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decisions about the company's methods and goals are based on economics and not on the product or service. How can these people make sound decisions about the product when the answers to the decisions can be different each day depending on the financial implications of those answers? This will only result in a failed *form*. This particular company, as it turns out, is suffering from lack of

work, and until they put the publisher and product first, the situation should only worsen.

I believe in what I do and I wake up every morning with the desire to design and compose books. If you think this is weird, then maybe you should rethink your motivation for being in this profession. Remember this: When I am hired by a you, I become a member of your team. I work *with* you, not against you. Give me a call, or drop me a line, I'm ready to work for you!



## Cookies by Design—More than just combining ingredients

I am not only famous for my original microwave potato chips (see my web page or Fall 1993 issue of this newsletter) but I am also well known for my execution of the chocolate chip cookie. I use the same recipe everyone else uses, the one that comes on the bag of Nestle's semi-sweet chocolate chips, but the success of these cookies depending on these two factors:

- **The quality of the individual ingredients**
- **The manner in which these ingredients come together**

The quality of your books will depend on these two elements. Every publisher produces books in nearly the same manner. The difference between quality books and so-so books lies in quality of the individual steps. A terrifically written book that is poorly designed may not be as successful as a poorly written book that has an outstanding design. Try giving the same manuscript to a book designer and one that design books and see which one will be easier and more enjoyable to read. You can say that both books were "designed" just as putting a teaspoon of imitation vanilla extract in the chocolate chip cookie mix does contain "vanilla extract."

The point is that each "ingredient" of the production of a book should be treated with as much importance as any other step. Your final product will only be as good as its weakest element. So think twice before you hand over the next manuscript to your "imitation" designer.

Okay, so enough about book design. Let's get on with the recipe. Here is my recipe for championship chocolate cookies. Pay attention to the method and order as well as the individual ingredients:

- In a small bowl, I mix 1¼ cups of King Arthurs white flour, 1 teaspoon of Morton's salt, and 1 teaspoon of Arm & Hammer baking soda. I use a hand mixer and slowly and thoroughly mix all three of these ingredients. I then set this bowl aside.

- I take another small bowl and mix two large eggs thoroughly and set this bowl aside.

- Next, I thoroughly mix 1 stick (cup) of Crisco's All-Vegetable Shortening, ¾ cup Domino light brown sugar, ¾ cup Domino granulated white sugar, and 1 teaspoon of McCormick's pure vanilla extract.

- I then thoroughly mix in the eggs to the sugar mix. When I am satisfied that I have brought the mix to be one, I add the flour mixture in three separate batches, mixing each batch completely. When all of the above ingredients are completely and thoroughly mixed (I didn't realize that I would be using the word "thoroughly" so much!), I begin mixing in one 12 oz. bag (2 cups) of Nestle's semi-sweet chocolate chips and continue until I see that the entire mix takes on the appear-

ance of one big cookie. It is important to note that while combining ingredients, you may experience taste requests from passersby and I want you to heed this warning: **Under no circumstances allow anyone to "taste" the mix until you have finished mixing in the chips.** This will prevent any imbalance that will occur if tastes are taken during the mixing process.

- Spoon small blobs onto a cookie sheet and bake at exactly 375° for 9 minutes. After 9 minutes monitor the baking and remove from the oven when the cookies appear to be darkening slightly. When you remove the cookie tray from the oven, set one end down on the counter and allow the other end to drop to the counter providing a shock to the cookies. This is critical in getting the correct appearance of the cookies. Allow the cookies to cool before removing them from the cookie sheet.

- There you have it: Designer Chocolate Chip Cookies. I usually get about fifty cookies per batch. Stop by my home page and let me know what you think of this recipe. I'd love to hear from you. *Enjoy!*