

Twinkies Revenge

Monday, May 6, 2013 | The Washington Times and Dean Obeidallah, CNN

The ding-dongs at Big Labor who refused to make concessions when Hostess Brands, the makers of



Twinkies, Drake's Cakes and Wonder Bread, faced imminent bankruptcy, now find themselves frozen out of the newly constituted company. Last year, Hostess was struggling for survival, menaced by high labor costs, a more health-conscious consumer and a recession when the bosses of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union cooked up a strike against the 82-year-old company. The union was warned that a strike would lead to the destruction of Hostess, so they turned up the heat. The 18,500 employees got burned.

After the union refused an invitation to the table, the company asked a bankruptcy judge to liquidate the firm's assets. Approval was granted, snack-food production began winding down, and Twinkies disappeared from store shelves. The unions, with company help to be sure, wrote the recipe for this disaster by saddling Hostess with pension plans that obliged the company to pay the obligations of other companies that had gone out of business. The Hostess business plan grew stale as management had to deal with more than 370 collective-bargaining agreements and 80 health and pension benefit plans. Union rules covered how bread and cakes were delivered, loaded and unloaded, eliminating the flexibility a business needs to remain competitive.

In January 2012, when the company first filed for bankruptcy, to November, when the company shut its doors, Hostess lost \$1.1 billion. Thirty-three bakeries, 565 distribution centers and 570 outlet stores were shuttered. Hostess was not the first to fall before the bakers' union. Cookie and bread maker Stella D'Oro moved its headquarters from New York City to a non-union bakery in Ohio when the union refused to drop demands that made the company less competitive, including insisting on a rule that employees get a paid holiday on their birthday. Thousands of employees celebrated their birthday on the unemployment lines.

The icing on the cake is that Hostess is back, and the intransigent union bosses are not. A private investment group rescued Hostess from bankruptcy and is moving its operations mostly to right-to-work states where employees cannot be compelled to join a union. Hostess will reopen four bakeries over the next two months, aiming to get its creamy confections in stores by midsummer. New bakeries will be opened in Columbus, Ga.; Emporia, Kan.; and Indianapolis. The company announced Monday it would also reopen a plant in Schiller Park, Ill., where the union would have a foothold.

The new investors intend to invest \$60 million in the plants and hire 1,500 employees. The union might have a hard time persuading the new hires that it makes sense to share their paycheck with the organization that put Hostess out of business. Unions will bleed members and jobs to right-to-work states until they get the message. Featherbeds are so 20th century. That's bad news for union bosses, but that's the way the chocolate-covered cookie crumbles.

Twinkies never seem to grow old. They can likely be bequeathed to your grandkids and look the same as the day you bought them. But before anyone becomes truly depressed over Twinkies' fate, keep in mind that Twinkies will never really disappear -- and not just because of preservatives. On Monday, Hostess Brands Inc. announced it will enter into mediation with the striking Baker's Union, which offers a little hope that the company might be saved. Twinkies will even live in the annals of criminal justice, thanks to the famed "Twinkie defense." Dan White shot and killed San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and City Supervisor and gay activist Harvey Milk in 1978. At White's trial, his attorneys argued that his diet of sugary snack foods, like Twinkies, had damaged his mental capacity. White was found not guilty of murder, but the lesser charge manslaughter.

So Twinkies are immortal. But there is one real loss in the closing of Hostess that should evoke sympathy. It's the 18,500 Hostess employees who are out of work. It's obviously never good to have your job end with no warning -- it's even worse when that happens in a challenging economy such as ours and right before the holiday season. Perhaps Free Enterprise reporter said it best. "This is a Darth Vader moment for America. The end of times are near. The Twinkie is dead."

Further details are available via an earlier edition of *The Daughtry Times* regarding the initial demise of the Twinkies Empire at http://www.daughtrytimes.com/uploads/2012-13_Daughtry_Times_Week_14.pdf.

Next Generation Sunshine State Standards adapted from floridastandards.org. Standards specifically addressed in this edition are strategically aligned with state standards and annotated adjacent to the respective inquiry.

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1. In appropriate paragraph form, compare and contrast the pros and cons synonymous with a major unhealthy snack-producing corporation comparable to Hostess failing. Do you believe this is the end of the Twinkie? Thoroughly explain your reasoning and provide specific artifacts and evidence limited solely to passage above to support your response. Create and illustrate a Venn Diagram to effectively explore relationships and patterns and to make arguments about relationships between sets. **(LA.910.3.2.2; LA.910.1.6.2; MA.912.D.7.2; MA.912.A.10.1)**
2. In protest of the tragic unforeseeable demise of the beloved Twinkie, a disgruntled lifelong consumer of treasured Hostess products ceremoniously sacrifices the self-proclaimed final Twinkie in existence. He boldly scales the Sunshine Skyway Bridge and reaches the pinnacle of precisely 431 feet. Upon releasing the defenseless Twinkie, the force of the gravity causes the product to fall rapidly into the bay. The function h is equivalent to negative sixteen squared increased by 431 reveals the height of the Twinkie h in feet after t seconds. Height h is dependent on time t . Graph t on the x-axis and h on the y-axis. Use nonnegative values for t . Illustrate the table and graph this quadratic equation. Does the Twinkie fall as far from $t = 1$ to $t = 2$ as it does from $t = 0$ and $t = 1$? Explain. Identify the *axis of symmetry*, *vertex*, *parabola*, *minimum*, and *maximum*. **(MA.912.A.10.1; MA.912.A.7.1; MA.912.A.7.2; MA.912.A.7.10; MA.912.A.7.8)**
3. In 1980, the Continental Baking Corporation produced a 10-foot, 1.3-ton behemoth to celebrate Twinkie's 50th Birthday. A standard however, Twinkie possesses the following dimensions: 1.1 by 3.9 by 1.5 inches. Illustrate the time-honored Twinkie to scale. Remove the circular portion creating a two-dimensional figure. Identify and define the following pertinent geometric components: *chord*, *radius*, *diameter*, *secant*, *tangent*, *point of tangency*, and *center*. Illustrate a series of recently decapitated Twinkies and identify *tangent* and *concentric circles*. **(MA.912.G.1.2; MA.912.G.6.2; MA.912.G.6.4; MA.912.G.6.5; MA.912.G.7.4)**
4. Identify and thoroughly support your reasoning regarding which of the following that best describes the author's attitude toward the subject matter discussed: flippant disregard, mild frustration, passive resignation or an informed citizen. Explain the primary purpose of this passage and identify any indicators, which suggest the author may possess a bias against corporate intervention. What is the central idea and what conclusion might one draw from this passage? Provide an inference that Twinkies loyalists may derive. **(RI.9-10.1 - 10.6)**
5. Using contextual clues only, determine the most complete and accurate definitions of following italicized terms: *immortal*, *mediation*, *bequeathed*, *confections*, *intransigent*, *obliged*, *liquidate*, *menaced*, *constituted*, and *imminent* as obtained from the passage above. Additionally, use each word in a complete sentence to demonstrate further comprehension. **(LA.910.1.6.3; LA.910.1.6.1)**
6. **SARASOTA MILITARY ACADEMY WORD-OF-THE-WEEK** Create a concluding paragraph aligned with the passage above using the following italicized word: *Nihilism* (nahy-uh-liz-uh m) n. Nothingness. Nonexistence. **(LA.910.1.6.1; LA.910.1.6.5)**