Waiting for the Prize Patrol

*By Dennis Knight*

 The first thing I will do is invite everyone here this morning to dinner at Elway’s. I’ll have the twenty-eight ounce porterhouse, and I hope you, too will order your favorite. It may take a few days before I can actually set the date, but when they deliver that first check, I’ll make it good.

 You see, I have just won five thousand a week for the rest of my life, and they promised to deliver my first check personally. I look forward to meeting and hugging the folks in the Publishers Clearing House Prize Patrol and I can taste that beautiful twenty-eight ounce steak now.

It’s all there in an e-mail I received yesterday from the chief honcho at PCH, and of course I acted immediately to secure my big payout. It was a matter of giving my name, even though they already had it, and giving some information to prove who I am. I was far too excited to keep track of all the questions they asked, and it’s confidential anyway.

 They assured me I am eligible for the grand prize even without a purchase, so I guess I’m the winner for sure. I returned their generous spirit by subscribing to some of their finest publications. I ordered Beer Magazine, Dirt Rider and The Home Shop Machinist. I also took a flier on something called Garden & Gun. I don’t know what’s in it but I couldn’t resist the irony of the title. The cover shot showed a pretty girl, an article about cheese (“Beyond Pimento”) and one on hunting down outlaws in the Everglades. It’s an intriguing mix.

 After I take you all to Elway’s … I can hear and smell that big beefsteak sizzling in seasoned butter and mushrooms … I have big plans. I’ll take a month or two and spend it in Ireland after a long stopover in Honolulu. Sure, I’ll be crossing the wrong ocean to get to the old sod, but unless they grow pineapples in County Cork and teach the colleens to hula, both places are in my dreams. Now if I should discover Guinness in Waikiki and freckles on the wahines, I may stay right there.

My twenty grand a month might not go far after Uncle Sam gets done with it, I suppose, so it’s time for a reality check. I won’t go anywhere until that prize van actually arrives at my door. In the meantime, I looked it up; Elway’s gets fifty-three bucks for the porterhouse and another sixteen for the baked potato and a side of corn. I didn’t even get to the price of mushrooms and butter, or wine.

So my friends, the invitation is still on, but I believe we’ll change the venue to the Columbine Steak House on Federal where they get six bucks for a steak sandwich and they’ll even toss in a baked potato, with butter *and* sour cream.

Hold on, is that my doorbell ringing?