



THE EMPORIUM SCOOP



Hello, everyone! The wait is finally over! By the time you read this, Spring will have officially arrived, even if it's just in the form of a date on the calendar. Seems long overdue, doesn't it? Not unlike this newsletter! We appreciate your patience and hope not to go another 3 months before you hear from us in this format again. So, without further delay, let's get caught up!

Most importantly, we'd like to thank each and every one of you for continuing to support the Lakeside Emporium in our current "form". We know you'd much rather be coming to our store and shopping for your goodies like you used to, and we miss those days and all of you so very much, too. But as you already know, staffing issues, age, and just the times as they are have led us exclusively to online shopping and shipping and we're just extremely grateful to have the ability and following to remain in business that way rather than just close. So, again, thank you! Your orders are so very much appreciated and we're extremely grateful to all of you.

Speaking of orders, Easter is just around the corner (Sunday, April 5th), so the Easter Bunny's assistants have already headed to the kitchen to start preparing your delicious gift items and treats for baskets! Be sure to check the website, www.lakesideemporium.com, to see what we're cooking up. You'll find our giant turtles are back by popular demand and packaged appropriately for this holiday, and, of course, our signature homemade fudge. If one of our delectable fudge bunnies doesn't do the trick, the traditional Fudge Trifecta ships for free, all year round. And don't forget about the wonderful truffles! As you continue to browse the website looking for just the right goodies to order for Easter (or any day!!), you'll also find a new item -fudge pops! See the website for a description of this fun and yummy treat. Ordering is easy, whether you're having items sent to your own home or to friends, family, or clients. Just remember to use the "Notes" section for shipping addresses other than your own, as well as any messages you'd like us to include with your gift. Click this link to get started! www.lakesideemporium.com

Thank you again to all of you, for taking the time to check in on us by reading this newsletter, and for all your support. Please continue reading to find out about this month's contest, some giving opportunities, and this edition's of "For Your Consideration" for some thoughts to ponder. We extend our gratitude, love, and best wishes to all of you.

For those of you wishing to make a sweet difference in the lives of someone else, a gift from the Lakeside Emporium is certainly a great way to go. However, if you are able and have the desire to impact many lives during the spring holiday season or anytime, we beg you to consider donating to one or all of the fundraising efforts you'll find listed and described below. (These giving opportunities are solely for the benefit of the recipients described in each, with your donation going exclusively to that effort. The role of the Lakeside Emporium is simply to make you aware of those in need and donate ourselves, just like you would/will. In no way do any of the funds go to or come back to us.). There are so many people in need, whether it's in our own neighborhood, community, country, or the world. Your donation to any or all of these efforts would go a long way toward addressing those needs. The recipients would be so grateful, and we can't thank you enough for your consideration.

<https://teamfeed.feedingamerica.org/participant/Lakeside-Emporium>

<https://gofund.me/1f0749035>

<https://fundraisers.hakuapp.com/katherine-merrill>

<https://www.teamworldvision.org/participants/JoeRunsTokyo/donate>



SOMETHING TO CONSIDER....

Create!

Several months ago, I viewed a presentation about the importance of “creating”, most especially during trying times. The speaker described the endless list of creative possibilities, ranging from visual artwork such as painting, drawing, or photography, to keeping a journal, gardening and cooking to playing or composing music, or writing prose. She emphasized the benefits of the process not just for the creators, but those “receiving” or appreciating the works if they are shared. Those benefits included stress relief, improved mood and mental health, increased self esteem, and overall feelings of satisfaction and fulfillment. In addition, the act of creating enables us to express emotions and share information and ideas, and to increase our understanding, not just of ourselves, but also those with whom we share this planet. As we marvel at works of art, enjoy the bounty of a garden or someone’s kitchen, or are moved emotionally by a song or a good book, we learn, express feelings or have them validated, become motivated, and perhaps gain understanding, seeing things from a different perspective. The act of creating and appreciating those efforts have the potential to make us better communicators and more compassionate human beings. And that, more than ever, is why it is vitally important for us to look for opportunities to create and perhaps share our “work”!

I’ve been able to witness this creativity concept through Gary. Many of you already know about his self challenge to take & post a photo a day. His original plan was to do so for a year, and now, 10 years (and 85 days as of this writing!) later, he is still at it. Though always striving to “take a good picture”, his most important goal was/is to take a moment to look around, appreciate, capture, and then share something that nature, or a life circumstance has presented him that day. He doesn’t aim to create high art, but rather to enjoy, record, and share the world around him through a photograph. The effort itself brings him much joy and satisfaction, as does the participation of those who look for, perhaps comment on, and share his work. I know I see and appreciate everyday blessings more through his photos, as well as marveling at the dedication that goes into making sure they “happen” each day.

Always a devoted fan of all types of music, Gary recently expanded his creative efforts to writing songs. Several years ago, he and a partner co-wrote the lyrics and melodies to a couple of songs and went to Nashville to have them produced, performed, and recorded by professional musicians. Lack of time and finances prevented him from doing this more than a couple of times, but the love of creating lyrics and melodies remained. Thanks to the wonders of AI (yes even I, the doomsayer-in-general in regard to AI, have to marvel at some of the amazing “good things” that can result from its use), he discovered an online studio that enables him to do just that from the confines of his tiny backroom office in our home.

He writes his own lyrics and melody (I want to emphasize - these are his original 'handwritten' words and tunes, - none of which are generated by AI), and then turns to the online studio and at that point works with tools to arrange and produce the songs. He is able to write and create, and then go to the next level as they come to life as fully produced songs that he can choose to share or not. He's expressed deep emotions, views about current circumstances, worked out some painful experiences, as well as just aimed for joyful musings and melodies about the lighter side of life. Again, his creative musical endeavor is all about communicating emotions, sharing opinions, and enabling any listeners to do the same. He's been brave enough to put himself "out there" for creative purposes, and, in doing so, brings opportunities to those of us who listen to his songs to feel, to laugh, to think, and just enjoy.

That's the literal beauty of creating. Doing so results in so many varied gifts for all who participate on either end of the act itself. So, I hope this may inspire you to consider what you may want to create and get started! Do you love to doodle? Maybe you'd like to start keeping a journal - not all creative efforts are designed to be shared. Do you love to bake or plant flowers and tend a garden? We, as everyday, ordinary folks can enhance our lives and those of others by simply being willing to share our passions and interests through any level or form of creation. Through these efforts, we will learn and grow as individuals, and make ourselves better contributors to others. In our own seemingly small yet impactful way, we can truly make the world a better place. No better time to start than right now! If you'd be willing to share your thoughts, we'd love to hear from you. [Click here to send your thoughts, questions, ideas, and requests](#)



CHALLENGE CORNER

Are you ready for your next opportunity to win a mystery package valued at over \$25? Good luck and have fun!

BE ONE OF THREE LUCKY WINNERS

Below you will find the YouTube playlist of the songs Gary has written. Click on the picture below. You can listen to as many as you would like, (we think you'll like most of them), but the answer to this month's contest is in one of the first 4 songs on the list.

Who is riding "SHOTGUN" in the Tempest?



Send in your answer for the chance to be one of our lucky winners. [Click here to send your answer](#)

SOMETHING MORE TO THINK ABOUT....

Now more than ever, we are being reminded we need to, figuratively, “stand up”. Daily, we are seeing more and more individuals doing just that. Whether it’s calling or writing to legislators, bringing meals and supplies to those who are afraid to leave their homes, attending civic meetings to voice concerns, creating music or visual art to express opinions or feelings, or literally taking to the streets to peacefully protest actions and policies that threaten our democracy, one by one, folks are finding their voices and summoning the courage to make themselves heard. We owe them our gratitude for providing hope, and in more and more instances, making a difference. More than anything, we owe it to them and our country to join them figuratively, and perhaps literally.

This is where it gets tough. Do you, like me, find yourself in a constant state of anger, depression, and frustration, searching for the seemingly elusive answers to “what can I, personally, do to make a difference?” Maybe you, too, wonder how you can possibly help put an end to unimaginable cruelty, corruption, and the literal destruction of our country and its relationship to the world. I have rendered myself virtually inert trying to figure out the most effective thing I can do to join those who are already acting on the call to again, figuratively, “stand up”. If you’re growing weary of trying to figure out how to get moving and do your part, then it may be time to join me and attempt to begin to “rise”.

Instead of concentrating on barriers, real or imagined, to taking action, we can begin by assessing the need. In the very recent past, it seemed a call to become involved in saving our country was solely a political issue, pitting one party against another. Now, however, our definitions of civility, compassion, humanity, and freedom are being challenged like never before, and we’ve gone far beyond politics into the realm of right vs. wrong. Might we then begin to agree a worthy need for action exists? If so, or if you’re still not convinced, take the very first step and educate yourself on what’s happening around you. I don’t say that facetiously. See and hear for yourself how our country is being led, and witness the behavior of those in charge. Whenever possible, do your best to read and learn about proposed legislation. Listen to whole speeches instead of soundbites. Check more than one source of information on an issue if you possibly can. If you feel uninformed, then learn more. You’re on more solid ground now.

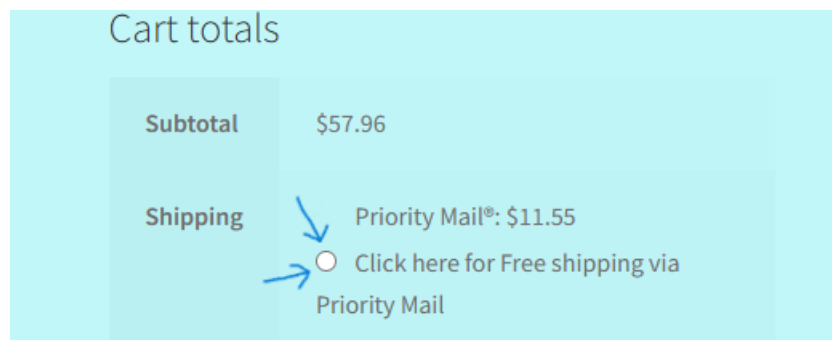
It’s important to understand that there is no step too small as you begin to rise, find your voice, and stand up. Becoming and continuing to stay educated and aware, then encouraging others to do the same is extremely important and effective. You may want to go further and start attending any level of governmental meetings in person or online. Call or write to your legislators to let them know how you want to be represented. Demonstrate compassion by doing what you can to help those in need, whether through checking in to address needs, providing meals or companionship, or, if able, donating to causes or organizations designed to help save or enhance lives. Pray, if you are so inclined! Read and study the Constitution, “real” history (check the banned booklists for titles), or books by or biographies about those who truly knew/know how to lead and act with compassion and integrity. And, if you do indeed want to become a part of peaceful protests, there are groups planning for their next events right now that would be happy to provide you with details.

More than anything, as we begin to “get up”, let’s promise each other, at the very least, to always listen: - to what’s happening so we can remain aware; to those who are more knowledgeable due to study or experience so we know how to intelligently form opinions and plans of action; and to those who are struggling to be seen and heard so that we might know if and how we can help. So, as weary or motionless as you may feel, let’s look to each other, listen, and extend or grab a hand, and begin to rise. Then, together, we can, figuratively, stand up.

SHIPPING NEWS

To thank you for ordering from lakesideemporium.com, all orders \$50 and up SHIP FREE!!

Here, dear newsletter readers, is the way to ensure your order ships free! When your order of \$50 or more is in your “cart” and you’re getting ready to check out, click on the button that says “Click here for Free Shipping via Priority Mail” (see below). It’s easy!



As you peruse our website, you’ll find other packages that offer free shipping. One of them is our **Fudge Trifecta**, which contains a pound each of chocolate, peanut butter, and maple walnut fudge, and **SHIPS FOR FREE!!**

