

Creative Ohio



*A Newsletter
for the
members of
the Ohio Arts
and Crafts Guild*

VOLUME 7 - NUMBER 2

FEBRUARY 2006

President's Corner - John Croft

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Lately there have been many questions on our on-line list with regards to the Merchant Card program through First Data that the guild offers to members. Diane Bruckner (the Guild's rep for our merchant card program) has had her hands full trying to get the confusion sorted out. She

has been in constant contact with Jennifer Davies (the First Data Rep) in regards to all the concerns and questions, and has been forwarding the many e-mails she has been getting from members on to her. Elsewhere in the newsletter is a letter from Jennifer that I hope straightens everything out, or at least eliminates the confusion.

We have always felt that this program was one of the major benefits that we offer to our members. I know several have told me that it was the reason they joined the guild.

With that being said, we must ask ourselves, "Is it time to look for something else?"

It's difficult trying to determine the extent of member's dissatisfaction with our current supplier. Is this just a misunderstanding that can, or has been, resolved? Or has this "blip" in the road uncovered a flaw that can only be corrected by looking elsewhere?

Have we fixed the problem. or have we just covered it over to fester and appear again? Or, for that matter, have we fixed it at all?

I am afraid that only you folks using the program can answer that, so please let us know.

Are you satisfied, or have you found something better? I noticed that Jennifer has offered to eval-

uate anything new that we may have found. It is very difficult to compare, so I hope that we can take advantage of this offer.

On a happier note, I have been "hinting" that I thought we would end the year in the black, and I can now report that we did. We ended the year of 2005 with a positive impact on our finances of almost \$1,500. I'll have a detailed financial report in the next newsletter.

On a different subject, I mentioned in a previous newsletter that I had been suggesting to show promoters that they include booth sharing in their thinking when setting up their exhibitor rules. I "think" at least one promoter that I have been talking with will now be including this option in their show application. I don't want to pre-empt them with their announcement, but as soon as I can I will let you know so we can help develop interest in this concept.

I know some shows already allow this to some extent, however I am talking about expanding the concept to where possibly five or even ten artists get together to fill a booth, share the booth expense, as well as the booth manning effort. Included in this concept is the possibility of having a "Guild Booth" stocked and manned (or womaned) by guild members.

Promoters are realizing that with the downturn in sales they must do something different to fill their spaces with quality artisans.

If you have any other ideas or suggestions please pass them along.

John

Editor's Note: At the time of this writing First Data was researching a comparison study for the guild using several other merchant programs that a few members have recommended. I should have the results soon and will post them in the next newsletter.

Editor's Note: This is a copy of the letter from our First Data rep, Jennifer Davies, that John referred to this month in his President's Corner. If you use the guild's merchant program please let us know your experiences and if you are satisfied with First Data.



OACG MEMBERS ONLY Merchant Services Program

Dear Diane,

Please accept my sincere apologies for the delay in this response. As a follow up to your urgent requests, I conducted an extensive query into the calls that were being made to the Guild members regarding replacing "obsolete" terminals. After collaboration with the manager of our Business Services I am able to clarify most of the Guild members' concerns.

Over time older terminal models will be phased out. The term "obsolete" refers to (a) older technology that will no longer be offered to our merchants (b) replacement parts or terminals will not be available when a merchant contacts the terminal Help Desk for troubleshooting assistance.

This does not mean that there will be no customer support; however, if the merchant owns an obsolete piece of equipment, the equipment cannot be replaced. The calls from First Data were intended to alert the merchants that their equipment is scheduled to be phased out.

When the Guild member gets this call, the merchant may choose to operate on the current terminal until it breaks, or choose this opportunity to upgrade to another type of terminal e.g. wireless. Because of the growing trends in the card industry, new choices exist for terminals, debit cards and gift cards. Should a Guild member decide to upgrade, there are purchasing options available such as installation plan options or lease options.

For further information on these options, please call our Business Services representative at (877) 277-3331.

Regarding the fees for the OACG, there is still no monthly minimum fee, there is still no monthly service fee, and there is still no fee for paper or on-line statements.

The rates offered to the members of the Guild are lower than the processing rates that will be offered to a non member. Guild members are not exposed to the same increases that accompany the Visa/MasterCard Spring & Fall Interchange Releases. OACG members have a dedicated relationship manager to handle all challenges for the group. We provide secure processing; we provide 24/7, 365 customer service support. Diane, we pride ourselves on providing excellent value to our merchants.

Members, who are comparing processors and would like me to perform a cost benefit analysis for their account, could forward to me proposals from other processors. I would gladly complete an analysis for them.

Thank you. Jennifer A. Davies
Franchise Development Group
(954) 851-7764, jennifera.davies@firstdata.com

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Please contact Discover Network at 1-800-347-7996 to get signed up for all of your electronic processing needs. You will need to provide Discover Network with the name you joined the OACG with, and franchise code of 1061. Discover Network will forward your information directly to FDMS for account set up to accept Visa, MasterCard, Discover Card and American Express and/or Diner's and JCB cards.

Questions?

Jennifer A. Davies
Phone: (954) 851-7764
Fax: (954) 575-6473
Email: jennifera.davies@firstdata.com

Classified Ads

WELCOME! NEW MEMBERS

CLASSIFIED AD RATES: Deadline is the 24th of the month. PLEASE NOTE we are on a **2 MONTH LAG.** 1x rate - \$7.50 for 25 words or less plus .40 per word over 25. 6x rate - \$5.00 plus .30. Copy must be typed or printed. OACG members are entitled to one free classified ad per year (MAXIMUM OF 25 WORDS). Email free ads to Creativeohio@aol.com Over 25 words subject to above rates. Name and address count as four (4) words, telephone as two (2) words. **PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY ALL CLASSIFIED AD ORDERS.** Mail copy and payment to classified ads, Creative Ohio, P O Box 3080, Lexington, OH 44904 or fax to 419-884-9641 and charge to your Visa/Mastercard.

2006 NORTHEAST OHIO ARTS AND CRAFTS SHOW BOOKLET. Over 450 shows. \$9.00. 440/891-9085 or CraftShowBooklet@aol.com for details on how to order.

2006 SPRING ISSUE - CRAFTERS FORUM. An Ohio/Michigan Arts & Crafts showbook directory. A bonus section of shows in other states is also included for a total of 900+ shows. Covers March, 2006 thru March, 2007 shows. Send \$26. to: THE CRAFTERS FORUM, 1411 E. Main Cross St., Findlay, OH 45840 or go to: www.etyperwrite.com click on THE CRAFTERS FORUM. Questions: 419/ 423-3299. e-mail: wc1eb2@aol.com

25th ANNUAL GREAT TRAIL FESTIVAL, Malvern, Ohio. Aug. 26-27 & Sept. 2-3-4. For craft application visit our website www.greattrailfestival.com, or call 330/794-9100.

ATTENTION EXHIBITORS! Christmas in Ohio Country, Nov. 10 & 11, Delaware County Fairgrounds. Outstanding demographics! Please call Melissa 866/553-6053, email: melissa@mjpromotionsltd.com for application.

FOR SALE - Booth, 10' X 10' canvas & wood, used at Yankee & period shows. Call or email for photos, \$775. Marje Shook: mordiford@hotmail.com, 440/298-1428

FOR SALE - Engineered cedar booth-roof & floor, includes heavy duty snap-on section tarp, roof & 4 sides, can be used as canopy-\$1500. Dome Tent-\$500. 10x12 permanent log cabin booth at Prairie Peddler - \$700., 330/667-2692 or bundy@netlink.net.

Amy Bernet
Mineral City, OH
ephesians@wilkshire.net
Candles
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dcarson1@columbus.rr.com
polymer clay ornaments
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OACG Featured Artist

February 2006



Ed & Marje Shook
 mordiford@hotmail.com
 www.wheat-n-sweet.com
 440-298-1428

Ed and Marje reside on a 26-acre farm in the heart of the Snow Belt of Northeastern Ohio. The farm has been in Marje's

family for over 100 years.

The Shooks started producing maple syrup in the '70's following in the footsteps of her Father's family. Although today they have a modern stainless steel evaporator, they still fire with wood to produce a hands-on quality product. With a snowpack that



averages 120 inches per year and their proximity to Lake Erie, the location gives them ideal conditions for sweet runs of sap. In the early spring

they can be found putting in long hours in the sugar-house they built in 1986. Special attention to detail and their pride in the product helps them to produce the highest quality syrup.

Marje has a love of nature, spawned by her childhood experiences on the family farm. She began straw work using some rye that Ed had grown. After reading some books on the subject of straw plaiting, she decided to pursue this age old Folk Art that dates back hundreds of years. In many cultures, Wheat Weavings have been a sym-



bol of good luck. Folklore told of saving the last sheave of grain at harvest, through the winter, to be returned to the fields in the spring. The farmers believed this gave the "spirit of the grain" back to the Earth and would insure a bountiful crop.



Today wheat weavings are a blend of traditional and modern designs. The straw of various grains is woven or plaited to make decorative pieces for the home and as

gifts for special occasions. Marje has spent over 20 years learning and refining these techniques. Through the National Association of Wheat Weavers she has studied with topnotch teachers from the U.S. and around the world. She has now taught at the NAWW national convention since 1996 and is currently their 2nd Vice President.



Marje and Ed participate in Craft Shows across the Eastern U.S. where she has won many 'excellence in craftsmanship' awards. She is pleased to have had her pieces hang on the White House Christmas tree, as well as the Ohio Governor's Mansion and on the Trees of Christmas at the Smithsonian. She has developed her own personal style and weaves traditional as well as original designs. Marje proudly states that she creates each weaving with a respect for nature and the hope of a bountiful harvest.



The OACG Needs You!

The continuation of the guild as a viable service to the arts and craft arena in Ohio depends on our ability to find folks willing to step forward and continue the dream of our founders.

Our search for new board members is going well, and we thank those that have stepped forward - but we need quite a few more volunteers. If you're interested, but concerned that you don't know what you might be getting into, let me assure you that you will be given adequate time to "learn the ropes" before those of us that want to retire leave. You will not be asked to take on responsibilities that you don't feel you have time for. Once you've had a chance to acquaint yourself with the guild's board activities, you can select the position that you are most interested in. Please contact me, and let me know your interests - and if you have any questions.

John Croft, President
Croft_John@email.msn.com
740/432.3847

President ~ Vice President ~ Treasurer Recording

Secretary ~ Membership Chairman

~ Web Master ~ Publicity ~ Fundraising

GREAT TIP FROM A GREAT WEB SITE!

<http://www.naia-artists.org>
National Association of Independent Artists
established for festival artists

Greetings!

Until recently, when packing up my canopy poles I was unzipping my entire pole carrying bag, placing the poles into the totally opened unzipped bag. I am tired at the end of shows yet eager to get packed and going. This method seldom worked well because the poles I initially placed into the opened unzipped bag had the nasty habit of escaping. They would roll out of the bag, get tangled up with other poles or with the lines I keep attached to the poles for my weights. I hate having to repeat tasks. Finally one weary afternoon I stopped in the middle of this insanity. I then examined what I was doing and discovered the mistake I was making and the reason for this inefficient method. I have solved the problem. I no longer unzip the entire bag. Instead when packing the poles I keep the bag zipped up and only unzip it a little. This way the poles have no means of escape and remain in the bag, not rolling around. It really works. Hope this helps anyone out there who is tired and finds that they are still chasing poles around.

MEMBERS ONLY

SUBMIT A SHOW REVIEW - sign on to our web site, <http://www.ohioartsandcraftsguild.org>. Click on "Submit Show Review," fill out the form, click "submit show review." It's really that simple. Reviews are posted without names, but membership is verified.

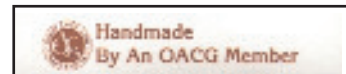
READ A SHOW REVIEW - sign on to our web site, <http://www.ohioartsandcraftsguild.org>, click on "Read Show Reviews," Enter UserId: showreviews, Password:readnow (both are lower case, no spaces) UserId and Password will change periodically, and will be posted in this (Members Only) monthly newsletter.

JOIN US ONLINE - A FREE private Internet discussion group for OACG members only. Ask questions, compare notes, share sources, show information, etc., all with the convenience and speed of email. Send your name and email address to monkoria@yahoo.com and tell us you would like to join the OACG-L

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Creative Ohio

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