

November 2013 NEWSLETTER

THE IMPORTANT STUFF:

Firstly and most importantly of all, I hope everyone had a terrific Thanksgiving.

I once heard a statistic that there are something like 2,000,000 songwriters in America. Lots of people can write a song. Knowing what you're doing is a completely different matter.

Here's the bottom line: Just because I put you in front of the most powerful word processing program ever invented by man doesn't mean, in and of itself, that you're Shakespeare.

Just because I put you into a studio with canvasses and put every color of the rainbow on your palate, that doesn't automatically make you Rembrandt, Da Vinci, Picasso, or Van Gogh.

Simply because I hand you a baton and stand you in front of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra that doesn't, by itself, make you Mozart.

So what's missing? What's that elusive element that turns someone from a "wannabe" to a "be"?

It's called talent. Never ever forget that the Beatles blew the nation and the world away and changed the course of musical history and all they needed much of the time was drums, bass, rhythm guitar, lead guitar and vocals....oh, yes, and something else-an absolute Krakatoa of honest-to-goodness genuine talent.

Don't lose sight of the fact that Peter, Paul and Mary made a legendary career and all *they* needed most of the time was just three voices, two acoustic guitars and occasionally a little string bass to provide some bottom....and a truckload of Grade A, U.S.D.A. choice *talent*.

The technology we have at our disposal nowadays isn't to be believed. For the price of a cheap used car you can have in your home a recording studio more powerful than the one used to record Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, still consider nearly 50 years later as the single greatest album of the rock era. Knowing what to do with it is a completely different kettle of fish.

I say all this because I've been wise enough to realize in my life that no amount of technology can replace a well written song. To use a familiar analogy I could take a pound of cheap hamburger and give it to a three star Michelin chef. And that chef will be able to take it and turn it into something delicious. But nothing will disguise the fact that he started out with plain low quality meat.

On the other hand if I give that same chef a piece of best quality beef tenderloin he/she will take it and turn it into a work of art.

In a nutshell, I don't try to write hamburger. I try to write steak.

I hope you found this month's newsletter informative and useful. If you know someone who might want my FREE track at <http://www.garrettsawyer.net> OR if you know someone who might like this month's recipes OR you know someone who might enjoy a word or two about frugality OR you know someone who could use a good laugh please forward them my email!

And if you have any comments, questions, etc. about my newsletters, don't hesitate to write me at garrettsawyer@cox.net. And don't worry about hurting my feelings. If you see something you don't like, tell me!

Garrett Sawyer
www.garrettsawyer.com

THE "NOT-SO-IMPORTANT-STUFF-THAT-CAN-BE-DELAYED-UNTIL-YOU'RE-THRILLED-TO-TAKE-OUT-THE-GARBAGE":

HOW TO EAT LIKE A ROCK STAR:

I made these mashed potatoes for our Thanksgiving dinner this year. Trust me. They're deadly.

PARMESAN MASHED POTATOES

2 pounds potatoes. You can use any kind but russets work great.
2 Tablespoons butter.
½ cup whole milk. You can use half-and-half or cream if you like it richer
¾ cup Parmesan cheese, grated or powdered
Salt and pepper to taste

Peel and slice the potatoes about a half inch thick. Place in a large pot with water to cover. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and cook gently until tender, about 15 minutes. The potatoes should be fork tender but shouldn't have started to fall apart. Drain and return to the pot. Add the butter and milk. Mash thoroughly. Mix in the Parmesan cheese and add salt and pepper. Serve.

FRUGALITY 101:

Just a quick thought. I once read about a family that, instead of going out on shopping sprees for expensive gifts for all their loved ones and friends, had a tradition of creating wonderful personalized gift baskets at home, filled with homemade cookies, fruits, nuts, etc. They were a hit with everyone. Not only was it a lot easier on their pocketbook but it was tons of fun to do and felt far more like the holiday season should (as opposed to freaking out at the mall).

SIR LAUGHALOT:

You could tell this one to a 7 year old kid and get a great laugh:

Once there was a businessman who was the sole proprietor in a business importing merchandise from other countries. He was doing so well that he realized he needed a secretary to help with the burgeoning paperwork. So one day he placed an ad in the local paper, seeking a secretary who could type, handle the Internet and speak multiple languages.

Shortly after placing the ad there was a knock on the man's door. He opened it up and there was a dog, a golden retriever, sitting on his doorstep. The man looked at the dog suspiciously for a moment then finally said, "Did you come about the ad?"

“Woof! Woof!” came the enthusiastic reply.

The businessman scratched his head, then said, “Well, can you type?”

“Woof! Woof!” the dog said again. Whereupon the man took the dog over to the word processor. The dog sat down and began typing over 90 words a minute.

Well, the man thought this was terrific. “That’s great!” he said. “Can you handle the Internet?”

“Woof! Woof!” the dog replied. So the man took him over to the computer terminal. The dog sat down and started making all these incredible web pages appear.

The man was thrilled. “Wonderful! I’d love to hire you. Oh, I almost forgot to ask. Can you speak a foreign language?”

The dog replied, “Meeeeooooowwww!”