

Stet

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE INDEPENDENT WRITERS OF CHICAGO

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NOVEMBER MEETING

Growing your business through change

BY VIKTORIJA TODOROVSKA

Have you been thinking of trying your hand at a new genre? Has the idea of entering a new area of writing crossed your mind? Would you like to get new clients and serve new industries? Would you like to develop new skills and diversify the offerings of your business? Are you trying to set business goals for the next year?

Feltre School at 22 W. Erie St. in Chicago.

The evening will be packed with fun and practical information you can immediately put to use. Rob Sullivan, career coach and author of *Getting Your Foot in the Door When You Don't Have a Leg to Stand On*, will share with us effective strategies for change and creative ways of leveraging past experiences in explor-

"Growing Your Business Through Change"
with Rob Sullivan
November 12
Feltre School
22 West Erie (at State)
Networking 5 PM
Program 6 PM
Professional members FREE
Associate members \$5
Nonmembers \$15



IWOC'S new meeting room at the Feltre School has great vibes.

If you've ever thought about any of these questions, you can't afford to miss IWOC's November meeting, "Growing Your Business Through Change." To learn strategies that will help you grow your business—whether by entering new fields or getting new clients—join IWOC on November 12 at 6 PM at the

ing your passions. He will also offer practical suggestions for implementing change through research, networking, and marketing yourself.

Rob himself has gone through several career changes so far and his strategies and tactics are based on personal experience as well as years of

research and experience helping others successfully handle career transitions. For more information on Rob, visit his website at <http://www.careercraftsman.com>

Note: Attorney Pat Felch, originally scheduled to appear in October, will instead join us in January for the long-awaited discussion on writers' rights and the Tasini case. ✍

Directory Deadline: November 15

The final deadline for submitting renewals for inclusion in the 2002-2003 SourceBook is Friday, November 15. Mail in your renewal and listing information for a marketing tool that reaches hundreds of companies. Questions? Call IWOC at 847/855-6670.

iWOC

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE/CHRISTINA FOSTER

Approaching IWOC in a new way

I don't know about you, but I'm generally a little overwhelmed at the thought of tackling this month's program topic. Setting new goals, re-imagining my business, re-thinking who I want to be and what I have to offer as an independent writer—it can be daunting. Keeping up with where I am now is often hard enough.

But the prospect and potential of re-invention also is exciting. This month's meeting will give me an opportunity to focus more directly on where I'm going and how I want to get there. Sentimental as it sounds, I'm beginning to feel that sort of clean-slate feeling that comes with the advent of a new year. I'm looking forward to how Rob's input may help me take steps in new directions, adding new insights to the way I think about change in my life.

True, there's a lot to be done to get where I want to go, especially in this challenging environment. But a session like this, successful or not, reminds me that I'm not alone in that. I suspect I'll walk away renewed in some way—not only more determined, but also more capable of the changes I want to make. (Hey—no pressure though, Rob—really!)

Bottom line? I'm confident I can accomplish a lot on my own, as I am. But I know I can do more when I have the encouragement and support of friends and colleagues with valuable new approaches to offer. We all can benefit from fresh perspectives.

And, you know, so can IWOC.

FUNNY HOW THAT WORKS

I'm about to ask you to think about volunteering. (It had to happen eventually...)

I'm sincere in my excitement about trying new things. It's good for all of us. I hope that as you consider breaking into new industries and taking on new roles with new clients, you will also consider expanding your role with IWOC. Volunteering can be one of those "fresh new approaches" you take in building and maintaining your business in the coming year.

We've been busy the last few months, imagining how, as an organization, we can adapt to the changing business climate. We're talking about new projects that focus on benefits, membership, clients, and the role IWOC plays and what it can offer. And yes, we have many volunteers, new and returning, already committing their time and effort. (Thank you all!) So we can, and will, do a lot as we are.

But we can accomplish

more—be of greater benefit—with more members' involvement. New ideas are always welcome and appreciated. We are renewed and energized when members get involved in new ways. You'll find the pay-off is greater than you imagine.

And, there's no time like the present. We have some critical needs right now.

Judah Graubart's passing leaves us in need of someone to act as Membership chair, or co-chairs. We've been making plans to introduce a new member category, re-examine the range of member benefits, and market ourselves to prospective members through new channels.

We're also looking for someone to partner with Tom Kepler and work on content for our Web site, www.iwoc.org—another area where we have a great opportunity to be more responsive to the business climate, and to express ourselves in new ways. We have the site's new architecture, but we need to take the next step on content.

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IWOC's new officers and board of directors: (from left) Secretary Suzanne Tague, Rebecca Maginn, Mary Ann Porucznik, Harry Karabel, Treasurer Alan Laduzinsky, President Christina Foster, Marilyn Hopkins, and Brent Brotine. (Executive Vice President Barbara Silverman is absent.)

President's Message continued from page 2

On other fronts, our new home at the Feltre School seems tailor-made to asking for your help with Hospitality. We could use someone to help organize "catering" each month and to greet arriving guests.

That's the start of the wish list. Among other things, all our committee chairs can use active committee members, too. We'd love to hear of your interest in assisting in any capacity.

TRY A NEW APPROACH

I hate sounding like the annual solicitation letters showing up in the mail now. And I know that finding time to volunteer may seem

impossible. But I do believe IWOC is stronger for the input and energy of every new voice. And a stronger IWOC can be a better support for your business—at a time when we all can use all the support we can get.

So if you can imagine yourself taking a more active role in IWOC—lending your time and your thoughts to the group, gaining the satisfaction that comes from pitching in, and opening up potential new avenues for your own business' growth at the same time—please do call or drop me a line. If you've expressed interest through your application or renewal form, we'll contact you soon. And thanks. ✍️

OCTOBER RECAP

Getting to know you all over again

BY MARY ANN PORUCZNIK

Talk about low-key. There wasn't any better way to get acquainted with IWOC's new meeting space than the casual meet-and-greet that served as last month's meeting.

Although our speaker cancelled at the last minute due to illness, we went bravely ahead with an "open house" affair. It gave this old-timer, who has been off the board and away from any active involvement in IWOC (you can't really count my editing of *Stet*—the only interaction is electronic), a real opportunity to ease back into the swing of things and a chance to put some names and faces together for the first time.

The set-up at the Feltre School is certainly conducive to small group networking.

People gathered around the large dining room tables in groups of two or three, snacking on cookies, sipping tea, exchanging ideas and business cards, and making new connections. Someone sat down at the piano and played a little background music. Staff from the school helped us find our way around the kitchen. They also answered the door and any questions folks had about their programs. It made me glad to be back.

Certainly, the programs, not the place, are what draw people to IWOC. But the programs just get you there. It's the people you meet who keep you coming back. The people and the ideas they share. Join us this month and find out for yourself. ✍️

Profiles of Success

BY LYNN SANDERS

Meet Kathleen Vyn— Writer

Length of IWOC membership: "Since 1985."

Why are you an IWOC member? "I think it's a great organization and it helps you as a writer. The seminars are really good. I've learned from other writers about networking opportunities and used the job line. In order to get to know more people, I volunteered for a year and was co-editor of *Stet*."

Background: "Feature writing, health, and fitness. These are my own interests, which I used in my writing career. I worked as an aerobics instructor, so it was a good way to get the information out. I'm also interested in preventive medicine."

Why freelance? "I can use my own time better than working for someone else. Most of the time, I'm really focused. When you're in another office, it's really hard to concentrate when the phone is ringing and you lose your train of thought."

Most proud of: "Medical articles, CBSHealth-watch.com—before it went under...translating medicine into layman's terms. I knew some of Dr. Keith Block's patients (from the Alternative Cancer Treatment Center), who were 90 years old and very healthy, so I wrote an article, "Integrated Cancer Therapies Give Patients New Hope." All articles are fact-checked by Harvard Medical School doctors and the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical School for accuracy. My editor helped me a lot.

"I'm also proud of my children's books and plan to reissue them in paperback. They're ecology books for children. One is *The Prairie Community*, published in 1978, the first one ever written for children about the ecology of the prairie. It's being used in classrooms. It's about how the prairie was once vast and has been destroyed, and how we have to preserve it. It's on a website, and was published by Julian Messner, a division of Simon & Schuster. The second book was called *Spring in the High Sierras*, about preserving Yosemite National Park. I wrote about the different ecosystems as you climb up the mountains."

Other interests? "I'm co-president of The Writers Workshop at Books On Vernon (a Glencoe-based bookstore). We have recognized writers who come in and we critique each other. To get in, you have to go through a committee. We meet once a week, and I like being influenced by more experienced writers. I've had several short fiction pieces published. Besides that, I'm working on film scripts. I also like reading—fiction and non-fiction and humor, and I love pets,

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Profile—Kathleen Vyn
continued from 3

especially cats. We have an Oriental short-haired kitten, Hermy from the Anti-Cruelty Society. It's like adopting a child."

Best advice to others?

"Investigate a topic on your own. Decide on whom to listen to. It's important to read about writing. Writing is a process and doesn't always come out perfectly the first time. Everyone has failures. I can fail and still be successful."

Personal heroes? "Lowell Komie, a member of the workshop, who wrote *The*

Last Jewish Shortstop. He had his own publishing company and was the winner of the Carl Sandburg award. Another hero is Kay Boyle, an instructor at San Francisco State and my advisor. She had 40 novels published and was a contemporary of James Joyce and Samuel Beckett. She told me, 'You only need a couple of hours to write.' She was very disciplined. She died when she was 90, after writing award-winning books."

How would you like to be remembered? "A writer who cultivated...helping the world be a better place." ✍️

Yes, Virginia, there is an IWOC song. Thanks to Lynn Sanders for passing it along.

The IWOC Song

"This Is the Place to Be"

Words: Jim Ardito & Lynn Sanders

Music: Frank Panico, Dick Marx & Associates

From: July 1986 IWOC Program & Stet

IWOC, you're awfully special
You mean a lot to me,
Those helping hands and smiling faces
Make your place the place to be.
IWOC, you run great meetings
Where we can learn and share,
Though witty words escape me
It's nice to know you're there.

(CHORUS)

This is the place to be
For strength in unity,
Where we can think and drink and link—
Together.
The loneliness we face
Is pleasantly erased
We've found this is the place to be—
IWOC forever.

IWOC, you've changed my lifestyle
I've raised my writing fee
I finally have some cash flow
This is the place to be.
I'd WOC a million miles to see those smiles
On Tuesday night's group therapy
To meet my friends and contacts
A networking family.

(CHORUS)

Welcome!

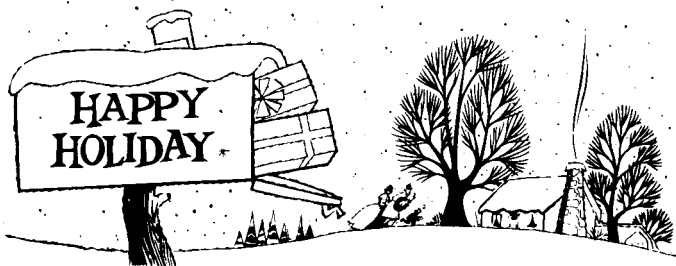
New Members Fiscal Year 2003

Susan Baird
Bob Barnett
Margaret Barry
Jack Bigelow
Marie Doorey
Lucy Gregor
Esther Kuntz

Gene Lancour
Robin Malpass
Steven Papa
William Shaffer
Maiké van Wiljk
Kristin Aasmundstad Walsh
Vicki White

IWOC's Holiday Party!

Watch your e-mail for news about
IWOC's Holiday Party in December.



Stet takes a holiday, too!

Stet will not appear in December.
We'll be back in January.

Sound Off!

BY ELAINE FIEDLER

If there's one language irritant that's gotten under my skin, it's the omnipresent "icon." Its value as a word has depreciated faster than last year's new car. These days the word icon is used to deify any thing or person whom the iconographer perceives as defining, standing for, referring to, or symbolizing an era, an industry, an art, a sport, a personality, a movement, a whatever!

The first time I heard the word icon used oddly was in my introduction to the wonderful world of computers. ("Click twice on the icon.") And I thought at the time, "Well, that's a really stupid name for the thing." Funny how it caught on, despite my opinion.

I think the darkest moment of this continuing bete noire of mine came when I first heard Britney Spears called an icon. The term is also flung about in discussions of Brady Bunch

lunchboxes and other cultural dross.

Call me old-fashioned, as Dame Edna would say, but in my memory, an icon is an object held in deep adoration in religious worship. Nicholas and Alexandra and the whole of Mother Russia come to mind, with smoking incense, centuries-old churches, and supplicants on raw knees. GI Joe, an icon? Action figure, yes. An object symbolic of religious belief, no. Mickey Mouse? Corporate logo. Madonna? Sex symbol. Britney Spears? All of the above.

Now, what can we call those cute little pictures on a computer desktop? ✍

Are you a language curmudgeon? Then e-mail us your thoughts, tirades, and kvetchings—we love hearing your viewpoints. Let off some steam AND get a byline, unless you don't want one, of course. E-mail map133@aol.com.

**Need work?
Check out
IWOC's Writer's Line
www.iwoc.org
user id: iwoc
password: chgowrtr**

Calendar

November 12

Board meeting: Barnelli's, at Ontario and Clark, 3 PM. All members are welcome to attend.

IWOC monthly meeting: "Growing Your Business Through Change," with Rob Sullivan.

The Feltre School, 22 West Erie, Chicago. For information about parking, please call the IWOC office. Networking at 5 PM; program at 6 PM. Professional members free, associates \$5, nonmembers \$15. Come and check it out!

December (date to be announced)

IWOC Holiday Party: Watch your e-mail for information about time and place.

The monthly food and networking get-togethers listed below meet at the same time and place each month unless otherwise noted. The groups welcome nonmembers.

November 7 (1st Thursday)

IWORP monthly breakfast. Join the Rogers Park IWOC contingent for breakfast at 9 AM at the A&T Grill, 7036 N. Clark St., Chicago. For more information, call Esther Manewith at 773/274-6215.

December 5

IWOOP monthly lunch: The West Suburban group is not meeting at its regular time in November or December because of the holidays. Instead, they're meeting on December 5. At noon at Poor Phil's, 139 S. Marion, Oak Park. Contact: Barb Dillard at 312/642-3065.

November 19 (3rd Tuesday)

Far North monthly breakfast: At 9:00 AM at Egg Harbor, 300 Village Green, Lincolnshire. For more information, call 847/821-1515. Contact: Carrie Suarez, carrie.suarez@worldnet.att.net.

If none of these meet-and-eat groups is in your neck of the woods, start your own group. Be sure to notify *Stet* so your group can be included in the calendar. A Streeterville group is in the works right now. For information, call Christina Foster at 312/274-0597.

For details about IWOC monthly meetings or seminars, call the IWOC office at 847/855-6670 or check out www.iwoc.org. Need work? Visit the Writer's Line at www.iwoc.org.