

# Stet

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE INDEPENDENT WRITERS OF CHICAGO

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## JUNE MEETING

# Expanding business with newsletters

BY JENNIFER OATFIELD

After last month's successful exploration into the healthcare market, IWOC continues to investigate ways to expand your business with a program showcasing the expertise of newsletter writers. The IWOC program on June 10 will tell you:

- ✍ How to use a personal newsletter as a self-promotion tool
- ✍ How to get the information you need when writing corporate newsletters
- ✍ How to position your newsletter service
- ✍ How to offer some layout capabilities for one-stop newsletter service

## GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS

In today's economy, self-promotion is a must, and newsletters can showcase your skills. **Esther L. Manewith**, a freelance public relations writer/consultant since 1971, uses her newsletter to get more clients. She has placed clients on AM and FM radio, broadcast and cable TV, and in print media. Her clients include realtors, investment counselors, MBAs, lawyers, educational organizations, and small businesses.

**Marsha Portnoy** will share the specific skills required to get stories for corporate newsletters. Portnoy has been a professional writer for over 30 years. Her work has appeared in *McCall's*, *Home Office Computing*, *Attache*, *Crain's Chicago Business*, trade journals, and others. Currently a contributing editor for *Modern Reprographics*, Portnoy also writes corporate communications for several local companies.

**Jim Leman** has been a freelance writer since 1992 and IWOC member since 1993. His Associates Newsletter Bureau provides one-stop newsletter editorial, design, and production services to clients of any size. His Web site at [www.newsletterbureau.com](http://www.newsletterbureau.com) remains his primary tool for generating business leads. Leman will talk about how to position your newsletter service in today's market.

Many clients are looking for scaled-back newsletters and one-stop service. Although you may not be able to provide sophisticated design and layout capabilities, **Joan Kinnan** can give you the writer's brief on layout design and software. Kinnan, a long-time IWOC member and past president, has been an independent writer for 24 years, producing newsletters and medical writing. She was editor of *Stet* for many years and is renowned for her imaginative layouts. ✍

## "Newsletters"

Tuesday, June 10

Feltre School

22 West Erie (at State)

Networking 5 PM

Program 6 PM

Professional members FREE

Associate members \$5

Nonmembers \$15

IWOC meets for a program and networking the second Tuesday of every month.

Preceding each meeting, the IWOC Board gathers at 3 PM at Barnelli's at Ontario and Clark. All members are welcome to board meetings.

For more information, call the IWOC office at 847/855-6670.

# iWOC

Independent Writers of Chicago

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## MAY PROGRAM RECAP

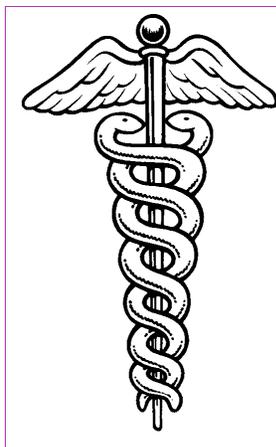
# Speakers say healthcare market is alive and well

BY JOEN KINNAN

IWOC's May meeting topic "The Healthcare Market" brought out a group of writers eager to learn the lowdown on this segment of the marketplace from guest speakers Pat Lee of the American Medical Association Press and Brian Wilk of Swilken Bridge Ltd.

Lee, who is a developmental editor, said that there are freelance opportunities—and some full-time jobs—for people with the right backgrounds. Lee uses independent copy editors and proofreaders on her projects, which include coding reimbursement products (familiarity with codesets is a plus here), CDs (computer background needed), and some books. She also shared this tip: AMA Press may use freelancers for other projects if a full-time job is unfilled.

Projects in the consumer book division, which is separate from the Press, have been scaled back, Lee said, but she suggested that those interested in that area team up with a physician to propose projects.



## CONSULTING AND TRAINING

Among other projects, Brian Wilk's consulting firm develops sales training programs for pharmaceutical companies. It's a growing industry, said Wilk, but he stressed that freelance writers seeking careers in this area first learn how to sell themselves. Keys to success include the ability to collaborate with instructional designers, an understanding of marketing, research skills, and critical thinking.

Wilks looks for creative, flexible writers who focus on work-

ing for the benefit of the client. He also pointed out that, while writers need to be familiar with clinical terminology, their copy must be geared to the 20-something sales person who is their audience.

Writers can contact Lee by e-mail at [Pat\\_lee@ama-assn.org](mailto:Pat_lee@ama-assn.org) and Wilks at [brian@swilkenbridge.net](mailto:brian@swilkenbridge.net). 

**"Writing is a dog's life, but  
the only life worth living."  
—Gustave Flaubert**

the novelist, who narrowly escaped  
conviction by a French court for  
writing his notorious *Madame Bovary*

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## Profiles of success

BY LYNN SANDERS

# Meet Robin Malpass

## Strategic Marketing / Marketing & Advertising Services

**Length of IWOC Membership:** “I’m a new member...since late 2002.”

**Why Are You An IWOC Member?** “I’m geographically challenged (Ottawa, IL). I live 80 miles outside the city. I thought IWOC would be a great way to network, meet other writers and stay informed about issues affecting our field.”

**Expertise:** “Advertising and marketing. My expertise is in concept development and copywriting. With a previous background in marketing and market research, I spend a lot of time reviewing data and understanding the target audience before ever writing a single word. Actually, writing had been more of a leisure hobby until I became frustrated with trying to hire copywriters to create advertising copy for my marketing clients. So eventually, I started writing advertising copy and developing advertising campaign concepts and found I not only enjoyed it, but was good at it. Spending hours in front of focus groups taught me that every single word has to count. As writers, we only have a fleeting second to make a connection with the target audience. Understanding the motivations behind the target audience and the client’s ability to meet the target audience’s needs goes a long way in knowing how to effectively develop and write ad copy.”

**Why Freelance?** “I love the independence. I worked for corporations for several years and really resented having to work specific hours. Sometimes I find my favorite time to work is late or early. I love the flexibility, and the ability to pick and choose jobs that I know I can do well.”

**Favorite Projects:** “In 2002, I partnered with a design firm and launched a new company specializing in destination marketing. It’s called TDSM and a campaign we created for one of our clients, the Galena & Jo Daviess County Convention & Visitors Bureau, recently won the ‘Best of Show’ award at the Illinois Governor’s Conference on Tourism. It was quite an honor. The campaign was based on using original art of the destination with tongue-in-cheek headlines and copy. For instance, one of the images was of Galena’s historic floodgates, which we entitled ‘Gated Community.’ The target audience—affluent Chicago and suburban residents—loved it. They immediately got the humor and were intrigued by the destination’s product. The campaign produced great results for the client. In fact, we’re continuing the series this year with more original art, tongue-in-cheek headlines and supporting copy. The ads can be seen in *O Magazine*, the *Chicago Tribune*, *Midwest Living*,

*Northshore Magazine*, and other publications throughout the Midwest.”

**Other Interests?** “Film. I was recently a producer on ‘Prairie Tides,’ a 60-minute documentary about the building of the Illinois-Michigan canal. It will be aired later this year on PBS in the Chicago market. Our ultimate goal is to have the film distributed through the Illinois school system. I’ve been involved in producing a few productions and really love visual media.

**Best Advice?** “Don’t give up! You have to believe in yourself and your own creativity. It’s absolutely unique to you...you’re the only one who can bring ideas to fruition with your unique perspective and life experience. That’s what I love about what I do, being able to contribute in a very individual way.”

**Greatest Satisfaction?** “When I know I’ve made a connection to the reader and to my client for whatever it is. That’s the most satisfying thing to me. When they say, ‘Oh—I love this!’ Suddenly the agonizing hours spent in creative despair were all worth it.”

**Your Heroes?** “Many. Victoria Woodhull has to be #1. She was the first woman to run for President of the United States, well before women had the right to vote. Victoria was bright, beautiful and well ahead of her time. Raised in less than desirable circumstances and with little education, she rose to the very top. Unfortunately, because she was such a freethinker and didn’t fit the mold of a ‘lady’ at the time, her contributions have been largely written out of women’s history. Yet, she was probably the single most important woman to live in the late 1800s. Victoria’s problem was that she was too advanced for her time. She was the first woman to address Congress and the first to hold a seat as a New York stockbroker. She was also a writer, and with her sister Tennessee, published and distributed a nationally syndicated news flier called Woodhull & Claflin Weekly. And if that isn’t enough, she was the first woman to motorcycle across continental Europe. Of course, in true Victoria fashion, she was 70 years old at the time! Victoria keeps me going. When I feel like I’ll never have another creative idea, it’s Victoria’s energy that pushes me along. Sometimes I’m convinced it’s her words spilling out on my computer screen. So far, we’re a pretty good creative team.

**How Would You Like To Be Remembered?** “As someone who cared. I really care about my work and try to do my best every day.” ✍

# Insider information on selling (words, not stocks)

BY RICHARD L. EASTLINE

*This is another in an irregular series devoted to books and Internet sites that are popularly classified as reference source material.*

**The Freelance Success Book / David Taylor / 336 pp. incl. forms and index / Peak Writing Press, 2003 / \$19.95 / ISBN 0-9717330-4-X / [www.freelancesuccessbook.com](http://www.freelancesuccessbook.com)**

Don't believe everything you read and most definitely don't be swayed by the hyperbole on book covers. On the other hand, try not to be so jaded as to dismiss those frequent claims for helpful advice and opportunities.

David Taylor happens to be someone who has the credentials to back up the authority of his suggestions and criticisms for writers. He leans heavily on nearly a decade of expertise gained through dealing with freelancers and staff writers as an executive editor at Rodale, a publisher of many popular magazines. His background extends to Web programming and e-mail marketing. A writer of science fiction, Taylor has produced five novels.

Taylor's objective is to offer feedback to those who write for the pleasure of making money. For many years he was in a position to evaluate both the submitted draft and the personal "sell" or lack of it in the accompanying correspondence or interview. As a result, he shares his guidance and tips.

His book is an eight-chapter compendium of categorized "how-to" topics, with many of them made pungent by a dash of prejudice.

## HOW-TO GUIDANCE

The range of subjects is much more varied than you might expect. But none would be labeled as inappropriate to the cause at hand. Taylor begins with the issue of deciding to



become a freelance writer (via two self-tests) and then goes on to productivity choices (full or part-time, a generalist or a specialist, and ways to maximize writing time).

Other topics cover speed writing and overcoming writer's block, sending query letters, doing columns, and interviewing. There's a substantial section on dealing with editors and that touchy area of fees, rates, and payment. Special-interest topics include ethical and legal matters (quotes, copyrights, and contracts); writing or adapting print material for the Web (changes in style or structure, e-rights, and markets); and book writing tips (proposals, literary agents, and editing).

A fully loaded appendix presents a sample invoice, permissions request, model release, and freelance contracts. These forms also can be accessed from a specified Web site.

Overall, the content is terse and straightforward. The "sound" is that of a seasoned professional

and although most of the articles are brief, there is adequate subject development for the more complex issues. It's a practical volume, more of a nuts-and-bolts style guide than a set of richly worded essays.

David Taylor knows the business and his book reflects the special advantage of having been on both sides of the desk. The primary purpose of *The Freelance Success Book* is helping writers identify and resolve many issues that can make their output more visible and salable.

## SPECIAL DISCOUNT FOR IWOC MEMBERS

NOTE: For the best purchase price, contact the author by e-mail at [sales@peakwriting.com](mailto:sales@peakwriting.com) and identify yourself as an IWOC member. He will provide the discount code you can apply to your credit card order (e-mail, phone or fax) assuring you of a 25% savings. 

This grammar puzzler can be punctuated as a love letter OR a hate letter.  
*From Jane Ranshaw, who received it from Joan Rubenstein.*

Dear John,

I want a man who knows what love is all about you are generous kind and thoughtful people who are not like you admit to being useless and inferior you have ruined me for other men I yearn for you I have no feelings whatsoever when we are apart I can be forever happy will you let me be yours

Gloria

# FYI

## Upcoming events

### PRINTER'S ROW BOOK FAIR

Every year, come rain or shine, the Printer's Row Book Fair literally is a breath of fresh air for Chicago's literati. It covers five city blocks and is thought to be the largest free outdoor literary event in the Midwest.

At this year's fair, booksellers, publishers, cultural groups, and others hawk their wares. New, used, and antiquarian books are for sale. And there are special guest speakers and events appearing on seven different stages. All these events are free. Among the many speakers are novelists Margaret Atwood, Elizabeth Berg, Alice Walker, journalist Sidney Blumenthal, presidential biographer Robert Dallek, and Erik Larson, reading from his latest book, *The Devil in the White City*.

The book fair takes place on South Dearborn Street from Congress to Polk, Dearborn Park, and the Harold Washington Library Center on Saturday, June 7 and Sunday, June 8, from 10 AM to 6 PM.

For information about the Printer's Row Book Fair, see [www.chicagotribune.com/extras/printersrow](http://www.chicagotribune.com/extras/printersrow). Or call 312/222-3986. For a complete list of authors and topics scheduled, see the Sunday, June 1 edition of the *Chicago Tribune*.

### SUMMER FEST FOR IWOC MEMBERS IN AUGUST

Every August, on the second Tuesday of the month, IWOC has a fun, food-filled festival for IWOC members and their friends and family. Make plans to attend and meet your fellow members for a casual, outdoor meal at a popular Chicago restaurant. You'll be hearing more about the fest this summer.

Do you know of any upcoming events that might be of interest to your fellow IWOCers? If you want information included in next month's *Stet*, e-mail by the 15th to [map133@aol.com](mailto:map133@aol.com).

**Need work?  
Check out  
IWOC's Writer's Line  
[www.iwoc.org](http://www.iwoc.org)  
user id: iwoc  
password: chgowtr**

## Calendar

June 10

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

**IWOC monthly meeting:** "Newsletters" with a panel of experts giving tips for creating and using newsletters to expand business. At 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!

*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.*

June 5/ July 3 (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.

June 26 (4th Thursday)

**IWOOP monthly lunch:** The West Suburban group meets at noon at Poor Phil's, 139 S. Marion, Oak Park. Contact: Barb Dillard at 312/642-3065.

June 17 (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](mailto: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.

*For details about IWOC monthly meetings or seminars, call the IWOC office at 847/855-6670 or check out [www.iwoc.org](http://www.iwoc.org).*