



Editor/Art Director: Carl Jablonski

Writers: Kathy Fairclough,

Cosmo Ferrara, Marcia Ringel

Illustrations: Dave McCoy

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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1997

MARK YOUR CALENDAR...

Thursday, Nov. 20, 7:30 PM
"When Things go WRONG..."

Join Standards & Practices Committee Chairman Bruce Riccitelli in a discussion about fair & ethical business practices, and how SWAN can help resolve disputes that may result when they are breached. Typical complaints and their resolution from the S&P committee archives will be highlighted. Attendees are invited to describe their own situations.

SWAN Members: Free
Non-members: \$7.50

Bergen Museum of Art & Science
327 E. Ridgewood Avenue
Paramus, NJ

Call the SWAN Hotline
@ 201 967-1313 for more info

WHO'S WHO

The third and final installment in a series profiling the Board of Directors

IRMA CHAZOTTE, PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR

You can be the best at what you do, but if no one knows about it, your business cannot grow. It's on that premise that *Irma Chazotte*, SWAN's Public Relations Director, has grown her own successful PR business.

As a writer/publicist, Irma works to get recognition and visibility for her clients. Whether it be a mention in a local newspaper, a quote in a trade journal, or a by-lined article in a professional magazine, Irma is enhancing the image of a range of clients, large and small.

"It takes time," Irma says, "and a lot of work, even before we write a word. I establish contacts with editors, study their editorial calendars and needs, find angles by which my clients' expertise meets those needs, and then pitch the idea to the client and the publication." This perseverance pays off, as Irma has placed her clients into *Fortune*, *The New York Times*, and a range of trade journals.

Besides perseverance, being a successful publicist (and freelancer, for that matter) requires being a good listener. "Listen to the client," Irma says. "Our job is to interpret what the clients are asking for, even when they can't artic-

ulate it. And then we must go out and deliver it in a professional way."

As SWAN's PR Director, Irma's goal is to beat the drum for the organization, to get it in front of the people who buy the kind of services our members provide, to let them know we are problem-solvers. To that end she asks members to clip and give to her all mentions of SWAN they come across in their local papers and business publications.

Besides her PR work, Irma does other kinds of writing. Her most recently published work is one she is very proud of, *One Hundred Years of Woodcliff Lake Heritage*. A resident of the town, Irma donated her talents to the project, which was a critical component in the town's centennial celebration. The book's designer was Wayne Pollack, a fellow resident and SWAN member.

ented professionals. I encourage all of our members to use this valuable resource, to be part of the referral process. As you strengthen your business, you strengthen the entire organization and everyone in it."

JANET McDONOUGH, TREASURER

With a background that combines the discipline of journalism and the creativity of advertising, *Janet McDonough*, SWAN's Treasurer, brings a solid balance to her clients. In business for about three years, she writes brochures, magazine articles, advertising copy, and more for large corporations and small businesses.

continued on page 2

"Our job is to interpret what clients are looking for, even when they can't articulate it."

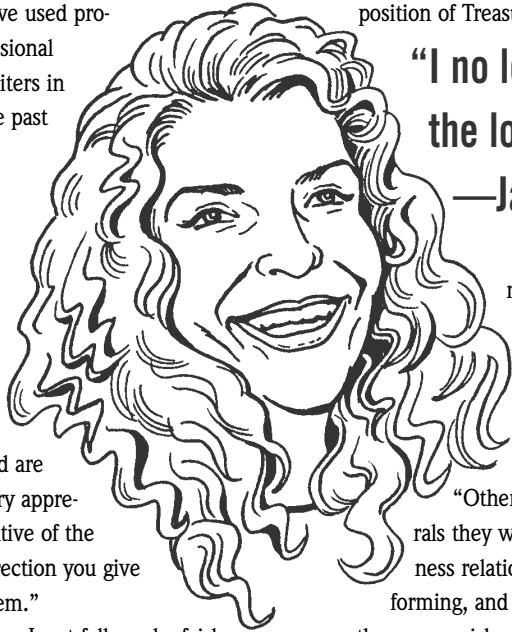
—Irma Chazotte

"Our collaboration on this history," Irma says, "is typical of SWAN at its best. Through SWAN I know I'm not alone. I can enhance my client offerings by teaming up with other tal-



WHO'S WHO *continued from page 1*

"Each has its pluses and negatives," Janet says. "The larger clients generally pay better and faster. But the smaller clients offer different kinds of rewards. They may not have used professional writers in the past



and are very appreciative of the direction you give them."

Janet followed a fairly beaten path into freelancing. Early on she held writing jobs at diverse positions, including a newspaper, an ad agency, and the communications department in a large corporation. She left to raise her family and, rather than return to the 9-to-5 world, opened her own shop. "I like being able to work at my own schedule," she says. "In addition to writing during the day, I might get an inspiration at 11 p.m. or midnight and work on it until 2 a.m. Of course, that can be a problem when my kids expect me to be at my other 'work station' at 7 a.m."

Having worked at pharmaceutical market research firms, she continues to do much of her work in that area, as well as on diagnostic-related

and consumer projects. "What I like about freelancing," Janet says, "is the flexibility to work in different areas and on different subjects."

One reason Janet accepted the position of Treasurer of SWAN is to

"I no longer feel I'm out of the loop."

—Janet McDonough

make more of her membership. "I used to come to the meetings, talk to a few people, and go home," she says. "Others talked about referrals they were getting and business relationships they were forming, and I still felt I was out there on an island. But since I made the commitment to get more involved, I no longer feel I'm out of the loop."

She also speaks enthusiastically about business information members can reap from the organization. "By networking you gain confidence in business dealings, knowing that you're on track as far as pricing, contract issues, and other matters are concerned. And an added bonus is forming friendships with some really nice people."

**CARL JABLONSKI,
NEWSLETTER DIRECTOR**

Unlike many, who stumble or are driven into freelancing, *Carl Jablonski*, SWAN's Newsletter Director, always

wanted to go it alone. And he did so immediately upon graduation from Parsons School of Design. But reality set in quickly and Carl realized that being a good artist wasn't enough. He'd have to learn the "business."

So he took positions with a number of small advertising agencies and design studios, and then finally, in 1983, with a start-up company venturing into computer-generated presentations, animation and special effects. It was here that Carl began developing the skills in computerized design that have formed the basis of his own business, launched in 1990.

While Carl continues to illustrate and design for print media, much of his work involves developing electronic media and interactive presentations. He also does technical consulting, advising companies how to set up and maintain computerized creative departments.

"The reason I wanted to freelance from the start," Carl says, "is that it allows me to pursue my many different interests."

Freelancing, he admits, has its downside. "You're always the outsider," he says, "even when working at the client site with a team. And when you're in the studio, it can get lonely. But SWAN helps to mitigate those problems."

To SWAN members feeling a sense of "isolation," Carl suggests they get involved, talk with members,

come to meetings and learn how others in the same boat deal with the choppy seas of freelancing. And then there's the referral network. "I believe good things don't happen to freelancers by accident," Carl says. "They happen by keeping in touch, by letting people know who you are and what you can do. That means giving a little of your time and talent, but you'll usually get a great deal more in return."

Carl's contribution to SWAN as Newsletter Editor has been to change its format from short reportorial blurbs to longer features, to give it a new design (debuted in this issue), and get it up on the website as a pdf file. "As the primary communication vehicle of the organization," Carl says, "I'd like to make the newsletter as interactive as possible. So I encourage all members to give me their comments and suggestions on what we print."

—Cos Ferrara



"Good things don't happen by accident."

—Carl Jablonski

HOLIDAY PARTY

Join your friends and associates for an evening of fun, food and good cheer on **Sunday, December 14th** at The **Brownstone 351 West Broadway** in Paterson, NJ. The party will be held on the **2nd floor** from **6:30-10:30pm**. There will be a **buffet** including pasta, chicken, salad and

soft drinks. A cash bar will be available throughout the evening. For directions to the **Brownstone** call **201-595-8582**.

Space is limited, so you must contact **Dave McCoy (973-305-8053)** or **Janet McDonough (973-328-0490)** as soon as possible if you plan to attend, and get your check in

to guarantee your reservation. The cost is **\$18.50 per person**.

We are continuing our "Gift-Wrapped Book exchange" tradition this year. Simply bring a book from your shelf or one that you buy for up to **\$10** to the party, and take another one in exchange.

WHAT YOU MISSED

The past two SWAN meetings brought members back to basics as three veteran business owners (and active SWAN members) shared their first-hand experience and knowledge of what really works when it comes to working independently.

Keeping a Winning Attitude, September 23rd

Jill Vitiello, president of Vitiello Associates, a business writing firm shared the results of a survey she conducted earlier this year. The survey showed that freelance writers, designers, illustrators and photographers shared three main concerns - money, time and control over their work. Most are motivated by deadlines and everyone uses some kind of food or drink to help stay motivated.

The evening ended with a share-a-thon of business ideas from the entire audience on everything from motivation to marketing. Here are a few of the best:

1. Create and advisory board of those who understand what you do and want you to succeed
2. Join a networking group, like SWAN, so there is always someone you can call for advice.
3. Volunteer your time and talent to SWAN, community groups or worthy causes you believe in. The reward is always worth the investment.
4. Accomplish one thing a daily. Clean off your desk, call a prospect or bill a client.
5. Market continually. Enter industry competitions and publicize awards. Report news of your business to clients and prospects. Write for a trade publication.
6. Continue your education – Take or teach courses to acquire new skills or enhance existing ones.

BONUS TIP: Encourage someone else - It will motivate two people at one time!

FreelanceFest. October 22nd

Recently, a SWAN member under-priced a \$20,000 job by \$15,000. Another had a child answer the phone – it was a client referred by another member. Someone else admitted to sending out handwritten invoices to her clients. Many of us sat in the audience shaking our heads in disbelief at hearing some of the practices of our fellow self-employed companions. But, I'll bet that there was not one of us who left without at least one new idea on we can practice our own business better. Phil Cantor, owner of Phil Cantor Photography and SWAN past

president, and Bill Cross, who owns Writing Solutions for Business, were the speakers at this month's event.

Phil says he owns lots of photographic equipment but the most important business tool he owns is his telephone. It helps him sell himself, understand his clients' needs and negotiate terms. "My phone style tells my clients and prospects who I am. That's why I can't understand SWAN members letting young children answer their business lines or even worse, not having business lines at all," he said.

Emphasizing the need for every SWAN members to be professional, Bill said, "It costs us all if any one of us acts unprofessionally. We all need to practice the highest standards of business practices."

Both shared lots of useful information with the audience. Some of the best tips include:

1. If you can't do a job or if you don't have time to, gracefully turn it down and try to help the client by referring to another SWAN member. They'll both remember the help you gave them.
2. Keep a notepad by the phone and jot down conversations. That way you won't have to rely as much on memory if a question arises later.
3. Never negotiate in person. Go away and think about it. Call a fellow SWANee for advice. Then call the client on the phone.
4. Make sure your phones are answered professionally. Use voicemail or an answering machine. Don't let kids answer and don't just say 'hello' yourself. And get rid of Call Waiting - it only annoys your clients.
5. Always leave your phone number when leaving a message. Why make anyone have to look up your number.
6. If you don't know something, call somebody who does what you do. Don't be embarrassed to call another SWAN member for advice. You may be helping the other person without even knowing it.
7. Charge what you are worth. Clients expect to pay professionals at a competitive rate. When you underbid a job, you are telling the client that that's all you're worth. And that client will always think of you as a junior level person or the cheap freelancer.
8. Be CONFIDENT in the professional that you are.

–Kathy Fairclough

SWANOTES

- **Jill Vitiello** was awarded two Jasper Awards at the 23rd annual awards program of The Jersey Shore Public Relations and Advertising Association on October 24, 1997. Vitiello accepted Silver Jasper Awards for "Best Practices Journal," in the category Special Purpose Writing, and for "Reaching Your Financial Goals," in the category Brochure Writing, both written for Prudential. The Jasper Awards honor excellence in public relations, advertising, graphic design and related fields.
- **After 4 years as SWAN Treasurer, Peter Adler** has taken on the job of Secretary to the SWAN Advisory Council, and SWAN representative to the Bergen Museum Board of Trustees, where he's gotten involved with a Marketing plan for the Museum, as well as serving on the Youth Gallery Committee.
- **Next time you hit the bookstore, look for the Home Edition of the venerable Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy.** The new book translates medicalese into more accessible lay terms and is great for a quick summary when your aunt develops shingles or a friend is diagnosed with something or other. SWAN member **Marcia Ringel** of Ridgewood, NJ, who edited hundreds of sections of the book on a mind-boggling array of medical conditions over the course of a year or more, is listed as a contributor. The project was coordinated by former SWAN member **Stephanie Phillips's Project House** in Hackensack.
- **We know Cathy Serraino** is ahead of her time, but not as far ahead as we reported last month, when we mentioned that her work was included in a New Riders Book, "Photoshop Web Techniques." It should have read 1997 (not 1977).

THANKS!

Carrie Oessman has graciously donated her time and talent as the designer of *Cygnature* for the past six years. She reports making many good friends as well as professional contacts through her association with the newsletter, and membership in SWAN since 1987.

Carrie's decided to pursue a degree in Interior Design and Planning, adding to her already busy schedule running a thriving graphic design business. So for time-management reasons, she's reluctantly decided to pass on the *Cygnature* designer's mantle.

Carrie deserves a round of applause for her years of dedicated service, and we wish her continued success in her new venture!

Writer *Jane Byron* has earned the proud title "Java Jane" for taking over the monumental task of serving the coffee at the meetings each month. She goes over and above the call of duty with the great food and pastries she bakes and brings. Look up "volunteer" in the SWAN dictionary, and you'll find a photo of Jane! All our thanks to you.

Don't be shy! CYGNETURE welcomes all contributions and feedback. Send newsworthy items, letters, and shamelessly self-promoting press releases to CYGNETURE, c/o Jablonski Design Inc, 8 Daisy Way Suite B, Paramus, NJ 07652, or via email: Cjablonski@aol.com.

Cygnature

The newsletter of SWAN
P.O. Box 440
Paramus NJ 07653

DOUBLEVISION '97

Dozens of SWAN sourcebooks were admired, gently touched, and happily carried off by art directors who flocked to Double Vision '97, a paper and product exhibition for the graphic communications industry. What a pleasure to hear, "This is what I've been looking for! Can I have three?"

The Art Directors Club of New Jersey sponsored the show, held at Mayfair Farms in West Orange, on Mon. evening, Nov. 3. A big stack of membership brochures also slid into attendees' tote bags.

The 48 exhibitors included paper and printing companies from New York and New Jersey. Holding the fort in shifts at SWAN's much-praised booth, featuring a blowup of the new sourcebook cover, were *Lynne Canzani*, *John Castell*, Stan Cohen, *Myron Freling*, Carl *Jablonski*, *Dave McCoy*, *Janet McDonough*, *Wayne Pollack*, and *Marcia Ringel*.

—Marcia Ringel

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