

# CYGNATURE

The newsletter of SWAN

SEPTEMBER 1997

Self-employed Writers and Artists Network

## Who's Who

Part 2 in a series profiling SWAN's Board Members.

**Dave McCoy,  
Program Director:  
"Tell a Friend to Tell a Friend"**

For Dave McCoy, SWAN's Program Director, the organization opened many doors. "SWAN helped me make contacts, taught me critical do's and don'ts of freelancing, helped me develop my portfolio, encouraged me to network, and, in short, helped me improve as a professional."

Working for large corporations and individuals, Dave creates cartoons and line illustrations for greeting cards, story boards, and many other media. After spending more than 15 years in a corporate setting, he set out on his



own. And when he considers the results, he paints a happy face. "While there are slow periods and a few slow payers, there are rewards in freelancing. When I speak to friends in corporate situations, I find they have less job security than I do. I'm not going to fire

"SWAN helped me make contacts, taught me critical do's and don'ts of freelancing, helped me develop my portfolio, encouraged me to network, and, in short, helped me improve as a professional."

— Dave McCoy

myself. As long as I am physically able, I'll find work."

How? One method Dave suggests is to tell a friend to tell a friend. "You might send a mailing to 500 names and get no responses," he says. "But then in telling the plumber what you do, he might just mention it to his sister who is looking for the kind of help you can offer."

Dave also recommends tying into the Web, (see davetoons on the SWAN site) and getting to know as many

## What's Inside

Dealing with Clients . . . .	2
Advisory Board Meets . . .	2
What You Missed . . . . .	3
SWAN NOTES . . . . .	4

SWAN members as you can. And take advantage of the programs at SWAN meetings, such as the upcoming "Staying Motivated in Slow Times," "Negotiating Contracts and Getting Your Price," and "The A to Z of Freelancing." With its programs, support systems, and referral network, Dave adds, "SWAN is like a life preserver for people in the professional arts fields."

**Susan Brierly Wills,  
2nd Vice President:  
"Don't Work Inside a Bubble"**

A freelancing veteran, relatively speaking, Susan has been at it for almost ten years. Previously, she learned her craft as writer and creative director at an agency and a large corporation.

"When I began freelancing," she says, "I felt 'disconnected,' as so many self-employed creative people do. But since joining SWAN, I can easily bounce an

(Continued on page 3)

## Mark Your Calendar!

The following meeting dates for the '97-'98 season are confirmed at the

Bergen Museum of Science and Art.  
Topics TBA.  
● Wed., Oct 22

- Thu., Nov 20
- Wed., Dec 17
- Thu., Jan 22
- Wed., Feb 18

- Thu., Mar 19
- Wed., Apr 22
- Thu., May 21
- Wed., Jun 29

# RELAX AT HOME, NOT WITH YOUR CLIENTS

Sometimes I need a colleague to bail me out of a deadline jam. A few times, I've panicked. Do I let my client call this very qualified person who, between the whining three-year-old, a barking dog and an aging dishwasher, sounds as if she works at a bus terminal? Or do I rely on an inferior writer who exercises better discretion?

I understand the plight of the former but respect the discipline of the latter. Before I instilled in my children the fear of God's wrath, a client or two has heard my best impersonation of Joan Crawford, a.k.a. "Mommie Dearest."

Freelancers must demonstrate professionalism. The ability to work in our jammies shouldn't equate to lower work standards. Nevertheless, Kristin Elliott, former Advertising and Public Relations Manager for AlliedSignal Inc., says, "I think some rules have relaxed and we all realize we have lives outside our professions. I don't mind seeing some personal aspects of a freelancer's life, but it is disconcerting when a child answers the phone. I can never be sure the parent — my vendor — will get the message."

However, we must be aware that not everyone's rules have relaxed. "My non-profit clients are requesting big bucks from large corporations and foundations -- traditionally conservative organizations," said Christine Frederick, chief operating officer of Signature Event Marketing in Morristown. "When I hire a freelancer to work on a project, I want the assurance that he or she will be the ultimate professional in dealing with my clients and me."

The bottom line is this: when dealing with clients, interpret their business style and mirror it. If you're not sure what that style is, take the professional high road. You'll never regret it.

— Jane Byron



## SWAN Advisory Council holds Second Meeting

The newly formed SWAN Advisory Council held its second meeting on September 11.

The Council is made up of all Executive Board officers and members no longer in office.

It meets four times a year, twice in the fall and twice in spring, and acts as advisory to the SWAN Executive Board. The Council studies and proposes By-Laws revisions, long-range SWAN planning and any other functions assigned to it by the SWAN Executive Board.

At the meeting Co-Chairs Claudine Calabrese and Janet Manning discussed their presentation to the SWAN Executive Board at its June meeting. Claudine and Janet also reviewed items for which the Board has asked the Council to submit recommendations.

Some of the subjects that the Council tackled dealt with SWAN membership criteria and portfolio review, encouraging member participation, programming and other miscellaneous items including the current referral process.

Members of the SWAN Advisory Council are Peter Adler, Craig Berman, Michael David Biegel, Claudine Calabrese, Phil Cantor, Drew DeGrado, Patricia Gandolfini, Karen Guancione, Deb Hoeffner, Joan Seguire LeVine, Wally Littman, Janet Earley Manning, Scott McMichael, Shelley Matheis, Robert A. Parker and Bruce Riccitelli.

— Peter Adler

# Who's Who (Continued from page 1)

idea off a colleague by just picking up the phone. We all help each other, and that's what it's all about."

As 2nd Vice President, Susan is responsible for marketing SWAN to advertising agencies, corporations, and prospective members, so her M.A. in Marketing comes in handy. She has also served on the Standards and Practices Committee and as a co-presenter of The Pricing Game. "It's not enough to be a bystander in the organization," she adds. "Being actively involved makes all the difference because it's the networking and professional camaraderie that are so rewarding." Susan also feels rewarded by "giving something back to the community," volunteering her professional services to the Mendham Junior Women's Club and the Jersey Battered Women's Shelter (for whom she wrote the 1996 annual report).



Willis

*"Being actively involved makes all the difference because it's the networking and professional camaraderie that are so rewarding."*

— Susan Brierly Willis

Susan's best advice to other freelancers is: "Don't work inside a bubble. Become an active member of SWAN. Meet other creative professionals who can understand your business, offer advice and support, and cheer you on with each professional accomplishment."

## Bill Cross, Secretary: "It's a Flat-Out Hassle"

"Freelancing is a sickness," says Bill Cross, SWAN's secretary. "It's a flat-out hassle. But I'll take the hassles over punching a timeclock any day."

Bill is a writer whose business combines corporate work with editorial writing. In the latter category he writes

*"I like the flexibility freelancing offers me, and the fact that I'm always doing new things and learning."*


*I never know where my assignments will lead me."*

— Bill Cross

regularly for magazines such as Parents, Sports Illustrated for Kids, Travel and Leisure, and Your Company. "I like the flexibility freelancing offers me," Bill adds, "and the fact that I'm always doing new things and learning. And I never know where my assignments will lead me." A case in point is an article Bill wrote about his son's going to hockey camp. That one piece led to Bill's becoming a contributing editor to Hockey Player, which this past spring commissioned Bill to cover the Stanley Cup playoffs, a lifetime dream.

One of the freelance writer's hassles is dealing with the relentless efforts of companies to usurp publication rights from authors. Bill urges all writers, especially SWAN members, to band together to resist this rip-off. "In addition, I'd like to see our members

better informed," Bill says. "I was shocked to learn in 'The Pricing Game' the fees some members are accepting for their work." Through its various channels of formal and informal communication, SWAN can help novice and experienced freelancers learn much about the business of freelancing and about their individual crafts. "Our programs deal with nuts and bolts issues," Bill says, "and are well worth the time."

Bill, who admits to never having had a "real job," sees SWAN's website as a tremendous advantage of membership that many members are ignoring. "Having a page on the SWAN site is ridiculously cheap," he says, "and is such a natural selling tool. How impressive (and convenient) it is to say to a prospective client, 'check out my website.'" — Cos Ferrara 

## WHAT YOU MISSED

Annual Picnic  
July, 20th

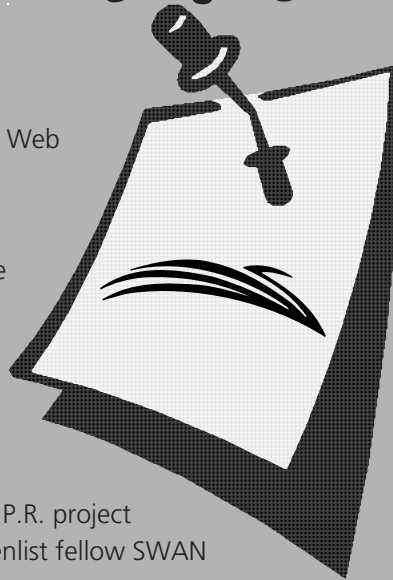
The annual picnic was held on July 20th at Van Saun Park in Paramus. After some initial confusion about the exact location (hopefully there's no one still wandering around the park holding a bucket of potato salad looking for "AREA 7"), everyone was treated to perfect weather, great conversation, hot dogs, and a wonderful zoo tour led by SWAN's own Steve Traidman.




**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.**

# SWAN

# OTTIES



- Writer Jane Byron's annual report for The Arc/Morris Chapter (formerly Association for Retarded Citizens) was the winner in The Arc/NJ competition (against 26 other chapters) and has gone on to national competition at The U.S. Arc.
- Two Shockwave movies co-created by Cathy Serraino were featured in the 1977 New Riders Book, "Photoshop Web Techniques."
- Writer judywhite received two Quill & Trowel Awards from the Garden Writers Association of America, for a book "Taylor's Guide to Orchids" (Houghton Mifflin, 1996), and a brochure for the American Orchid Society "Orchids" Calendar (Chapters Publishing, 1996).
- SWAN's "Creative Cafe' Portfolio Review" paid off for CreativeCopy by Steve Traiman, with a referral from new member Deborah Ugoretz. Deborah's husband needed help for a 3-month P.R. project for the Centennial of The Jewish Forward, and Steve was able to enlist fellow SWAN member Peter Adler to win the job.
- Writer Jill Vitiello was connected with a project for Deloitte & Touche through SWAN's referral network. SWAN writer Cos Ferrara, who does a lot of work for D&T, was busy and passed on the referral to Barbara Ross, the writer's referral coordinator, who in turn passed it on to Jill. It just goes to show you that the SWAN system really works — and pays off! 

Copyright © 1997. Cygneture

Printed by: **The Print Shop**

Kenvil Plaza, Store 12  
760 Route 46,  
Kenvil, NJ 07847

Phone: (201) 584-7935

Fax: (201) 584-4154



The newsletter of SWAN the Self-Employed Artists and Writers Network

P.O. Box 440, Paramus, NJ 07653 — Tel: (201) 967-1313

SWAN seeks news about members and their achievements.

Write to the editorial staff. **EDITOR:** Carl Jablonski

**GRAPHIC DESIGN:** Carrie Oesmann

**ILLUSTRATIONS:** Dave McCoy (p.1, 2 & 3)

**CONTRIBUTORS:** Peter Adler, Jane Byron, Cosmo Ferrara

## Cygneture

The newsletter of SWAN

P.O. Box 440

Paramus NJ 07653

BULK RATE  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 148  
Paramus, NJ