

Stet

Independent Writers of Chicago

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SEPTEMBER MEETING PREVIEW

Self-Publishing: How to Create & Sell Your Book

File under Terminology, mistaken: Self-published book and e-book mean the same thing. They don't. It's true that some self-published books are also electronically produced, and some e-books are self-published. Some, but not all.

The Grapes of Wrath may be available as an ink-on-paper, printed book (p-book), but you can also buy the audio or Braille versions. Or an e-book edition. The differences are in formatting; the content remains the same in each.

We'll skip those other formatting choices and concentrate on self-publishing print and electronic books at the September IWOC program. Three experts in the field will be on hand to discuss the ins, outs, positives, and negatives of writing a book and deciding to publish it all by yourself.

Jim Kepler, owner of Adams Press, a producer of books for small presses and independent authors since 1942, will present an overview of the process and opportunities for writers who decide to go it alone, without the help of an agent, traditional publisher, or distributor. He will moderate the panel.

Linda Wolf, owner of Network Publishing Partners, helps self-publishing authors with editing, design, and production of their books. She created a nationwide network of professional



freelance writers and editors under a team of project managers to create and customize books and other client materials and products. She specializes in developmental editing for independent authors both of fiction and nonfiction books. Linda also provides project management services to self-publishing authors, guiding them through all the steps from raw manuscript to finished digital or print book.

Continued on page 8.

IWOC THANKS. . .

We have a wonderful slate of officers for the coming year (see page 6), but let's hoist a glass to the terrific performance of our outgoing board members.

Outgoing president **Dave Epstein** was an innovative and meticulous leader. No detail was too small to escape his eagle eye, and he lent a hand to the committees as well as the board. He is leaving the board altogether because he has a lot on his plate this year. He'll be teaching a university course in writing.

Outgoing treasurer **Nancy Solomon** kept us on the straight and narrow financially, paid the bills, and duly notified us of where we stood at each board meeting. This was not easy because the accounting software was geared to a PC, and she has a Mac. Nevertheless, she persevered with good humor and she leaves us in great shape moneywise.

Jim Hodl is leaving the board with regret, but it has to be. He's taken a full-time job in Arizona with the Department of Interior. (Oddly, he had sent his resume to them years ago, and just recently heard back.) Many remember the excellent job he did as program chair for several years, and he continued to be a valuable contributor to that committee while on the board. ■

Officers

President

David Epstein 708/567-9705

president@iwoc.org

Executive Vice President

Betsy Storm 312/421-1510

Treasurer

Nancy Solomon 773/262-8070

Secretary

Jennifer Lyng 773/769-5291

Parliamentarian

Roger Rueff 773/769-5291

Board of Directors

Jim Hodl 773/777-5710

Ann Kepler 773/761-1858

Joel Kinnan 708/366-8573

Catherine Rategan 312/266-8146

Laura Stigler 773/248-0158

Committees

Public Relations

Katherine Mikkelsen 847/253-3681 chair

Membership

Brent Brotine 312/214-2907 chair

Jeff Steele 773/481-0010

Programs

Stewart Truelsen 847/962-1393 chair

Karen Schwartz 708/386-3044

Jim Kepler 773-761-1858

Social Media

Roger Rueff 773/769-5291 chair

Jim Kepler 773/761-1858

Writers' Line

chair open

Karleen McAllester 847/644-2524

Web Site: www.iwoc.org

Roger Rueff, webmaster

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Stet Editor

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Contributors: David Epstein, Jim Kepler, Joel Kinnan, Katherine Mikkelsen.

The Last Detail



It's way past my *Stet* deadline, so I'm sorely tempted to title my final column as IWOC president, "What Roger Said" and keep this very short—and bibliographically precise:

See Rueff, Roger. "Swan Song." *Stet*, September 2011 (Chicago: Independent Writers of Chicago), p. 2 & passim.

I haven't had a chance to use *passim* since graduate school—and I never actually used it then—but it's a fun word to toss in (excuse me, in which to toss). Anyway, if you know what it means, great, and if you don't, you can look it up—but why bother?

Actually, I do want to lift some important thoughts from Roger's farewell column:

"If you want to know why IWOC works, look no further than the masthead of *Stet*. There you will find the names of the officers, the board of directors, and the chairs and members of IWOC committees. These are your fellow freelancers whose selfless commitment to the cause of success for all makes IWOC function. Each has his/her own reason for contributing time and effort to the cause, but all are important to its advancement, and all deserve a note of special thanks.

"If you have served on the IWOC board or on any committee or written a meeting recap [Dave's note: or any article] for *Stet* or helped in any other way ... I tip my hat to you in thanks. You have eased my own path and helped make my efforts worthwhile."

For 30 years IWOC has remained a dy-

namic organization and a source of professional support and comradeship for independent writers around Chicago from Indiana to Wisconsin, and we have done this in a time of rapid, unprecedented, and sometimes disruptive change in the professions of writing and publishing. We—and that is the Emphatic We—achieved and continue to achieve this through the creative energy and dedication of scores and scores of writers who have not simply joined the organization,



but also become involved in leadership, planning activities, and propelling IWOC forward with fresh ideas.

The board and committee members play a vital role in these efforts, but the contributions of many other members who for various reasons may not want to or cannot serve on a formal committee are equally indispensable. All of them—all of us—recognize that independent writers cannot be insulated writers, and that we all do better when

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President's Column

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we help each other and share our collective knowledge and experience.

In the past two years, we have developed programs in new topics and types of writing (e.g., blogging), helped members get better at using social media for marketing and business networking, launched social networking mixers with other Chicago-area writing and publishing groups, and made IWOC more visible by participating in joint programs for the Chicago creative community, such as the WBEZ fair for self-employed professionals and the yearly Creative Chicago Expos. We also produced a successful evening workshop titled "Freelance Writing/Communications: The Starter Kit," which involved four members as organizers and some of them and several others as presenters, in addition to outside speakers.

In all these projects, a major goal was to attract more members and find ways to get both current and new members more actively engaged with IWOC. Indeed, we have gained 20-plus new members over the past two years and several of them have become actively involved. In fact some of our incoming board members have joined IWOC within the last 1-5 years, while other recent recruits are joining committees.

All of these activities developed out of a strategy-planning session in late 2011 where 17 IWOC members spent a half-day figuring out more clearly whom IWOC is trying to serve, what services they need, and how to reach them and make them more aware of IWOC. Like effective writers, IWOC needs to understand its target audiences and how to reach them, and this needs to be an ongoing effort.

We need to keep on recruiting, keep on engaging all members, and keep on adapting to the changes in the environment for professional writers.

All of this is WE-work.

And the amazing thing about IWOC—which you may not fully appreciate until you serve on the board—is that IWOCers are an inexhaustible well of creative new ideas and valuable business experience. As I prepare to leave the board, I've been de-



lighted to see several people come forward in recent months with wonderful new ideas and initiatives for the coming year, such as the meet-up and reception for the IWOC LinkedIn discussion group scheduled for October 8, which is being planned by Jim Kepler, Sally Chapralis, and others.

When I joined IWOC eight years ago, I was warmly welcomed aboard and fairly soon afterward was invited to join the Programs committee. I went on to chair that committee for a couple of years before being invited onto the board and turning over programs to Stu Truelsen. Then one thing led to another. All along the way, I found that the more I contributed to IWOC, the more I got out of it. As many longtime members will be happy to tell you (just ask), what they get out of IWOC in referrals, business ideas, and other benefits came to them because they got involved—and it pays for their membership dues hundreds of times over.

I had already said I wanted to step down as president because I think it's good for the organization to have new leaders and a fresh perspective, but I was going to stay on as a board member until I found a posting on Writers' Line that really captured my interest. This fall semester I'll be teaching Advanced Professional Writing to upper-division students at Indiana University Northwest in Gary. The workload will be quite intensive, so I decided I had

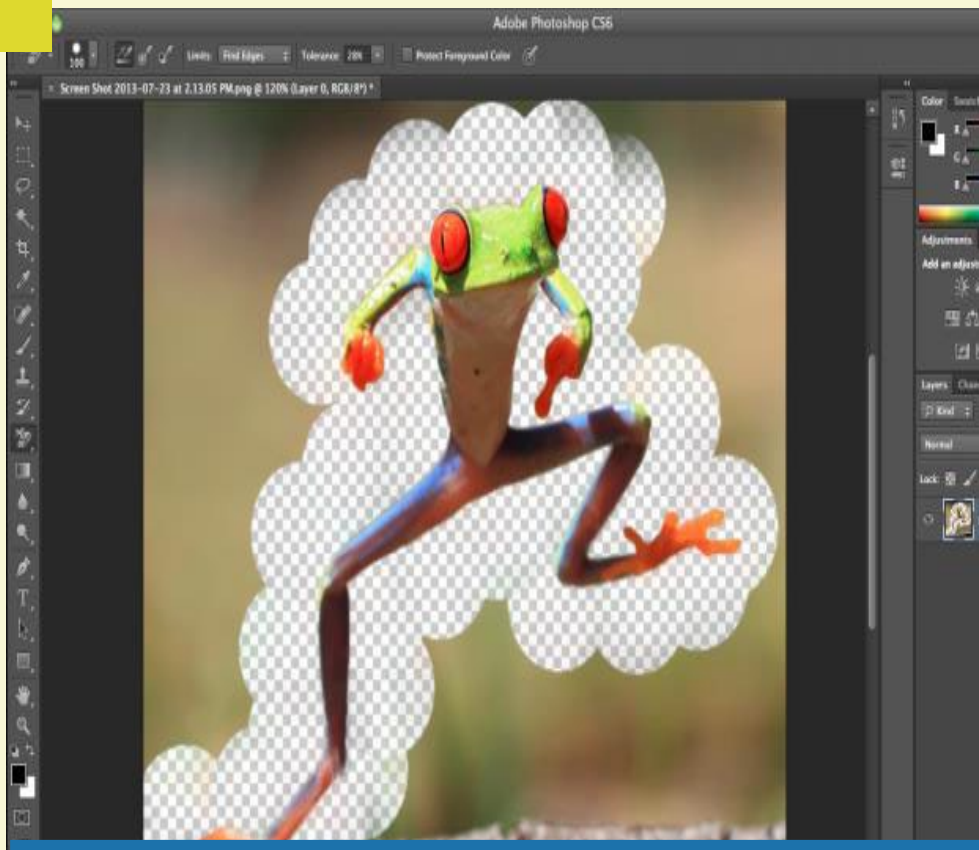
to step off the board entirely. So, you see, it's all the fault of the IWOC and Writers' Line Job Board.

It's good to know that, with the blessing of the voting members attending the September meeting, IWOC will continue to have strong and effective leadership from a hard-working board led by Jim Kepler.

I really appreciate the opportunity to have served as IWOC's president and I am grateful for the support of board members and other IWOCers. I look forward to seeing you all at meetings and will support IWOC's progress as we continue to help independent writers move into the constantly evolving Brave New World of web writing, cyber journalism, social media, online marketing, and virtual networking. We are learning to thrive in that, but it is nice to meet face-to-face once in a while at IWOC meetings and elsewhere.

I hope we will never see the day when we all cuddle up to our tablets or smartphones to hold our meetings on Skype or somewhere in the Cloud.

And now, Joen, you will no longer have to dun me for the monthly column.. ■



Free Photoshop-like Features

If you want *all* the Photoshop features without paying for Photoshop itself, go to getgimp.com and download Gimp, a *free* open-source program that purports to provide professional design tools that are comparable to Photoshop's, and it's available for both the Mac and PC. You can edit images, paint, retouch photos like an expert (and remove backgrounds), create animations, convert images to other formats, and more. And it's supposedly much easier to use than Photoshop. CNet's editors gave it five stars this June. (You can download it from there too.) It also got very favorable ratings from *PC Magazine* and *PC World*.

A warning to Photoshop users: it may *do* what Photoshop does, but it doesn't *look* like Photoshop, so there's a learning curve. Still, you can't beat the price, and if you've never used Photoshop, Gimp sounds like a great free alternative to a very pricey program. ■

— The editor

A Slick Tool for Eliminating Busy Photo Backgrounds

Has this ever happened to you: Someone takes what may be your best photo *ever*, but you can't post it anywhere 'cause it has a drecky, really busy background? With Photoshop, you can fix that, but it's tedious work, and many folks don't have Photoshop.

While setting up the next page with the IWOCFest pics, I stumbled upon a fabulous solution, not only for photos, but also for any image for which you want to eliminate or change the background. You can also use it to extract one or more people/objects from a group photo or image.

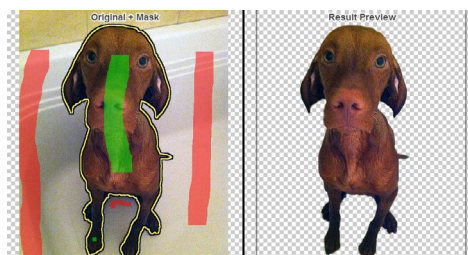
Clipping Magic is a *free* online program. No download to take up space on your computer. Here's what you do:

1. Be sure the image you want is saved to your computer. Then go to clipping-magic.com.

2. Click the blue "Choose File" button, find your image on your computer and click/double-click to upload it. Or just drag and drop your image into the dotted box.

3. From the tools at the top, draw a green line on the parts of the image you want to keep.

4. Draw a red line on the parts of the image you want to remove, e.g., the background. Zoom in if you need to.



5. When you're finished, save your object as a .png file and download it. You can replace the background with a plain color or leave it transparent.

Depending on the complexity of your image, you may have to mark little bits of the background or image with either red or green to be sure they're included/excluded. It's easy to see how you're doing, though. The original and the marked version are shown side-by-side as you're working, and you can erase mistakes.

The 13 easy-to-understand tools allow you to change the size of the marking lines, zoom, smooth rough edges, replace the background with a plain color, and more.

This is the alpha (1st) version of Clipping Magic, but it worked fine for me. I used it on three pics on the next page. (See if you can find them.) Clipping Magic is so fast and easy, it seems perfect for people who have only an occasional need to fix photos/images or don't want to shell out for Photoshop. ■

— Joen Kinnan

IWOCFEST RECAP

IWOCFest 2013: A Picture-Perfect Party

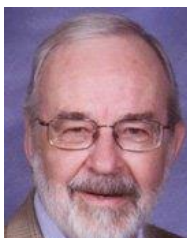


Profiles: IWOC's 2013-2014 Board Nominees

The September IWOC meeting includes our annual business meeting and election of officers. The nominating committee (chair Dave Epstein and members Laura Stigler and Jeff Steele) have brought us a fine slate. Here it is:

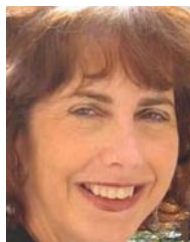
President: Jim Kepler

Jim Kepler owns Adams Press, a 71-year-old book production company that serves small presses. A former acquisitions editor, he has also taught writing at three area universities, and he is the author of a half dozen books and numerous articles. He joined IWOC in 1982.



Vice President: Betsy Storm

Betsy Storm is the principal of TopDrawer Communications, a Chicago-based enterprise that helps clients communicate with various audiences. Earlier, she spent 20-plus years in communications, including at Chicago's Northwestern Memorial Hospital and Anixter Center.



Secretary: Jennifer Lyng Rueff

A freelance writer for nine years, Jennifer Lyng focusses on health and fitness, sports, and personal finance/investing issues. She is currently working on a memoir. As IWOC secretary, she has perfected the art of one-page minutes.



Treasurer: Brent Brotine

Freelancing for advertising agencies and companies since 1995, Brent Brotine specializes in direct response, financial, high-tech, and health-care copy. He formerly worked at ad agencies including Foote, Cone & Belding, and DDB Chicago. He was IWOC President from 2000-2002.



Parliamentarian: Roger Rueff

Roger Rueff, Ph.D., is the owner of Write Now, Inc. He was IWOC president from 2007-2011. He is also a produced playwright and screenwriter and creator of storytelling techniques presented in his book *Discovering the Soul of Your Story* and on its companion website Soul of Your Story Academy.



Board Member: Ann Kepler

Ann Kepler is a prize-winning author of lifestyle books, including *Elder Care* and *The Healthy Life*, *Work-Life Balance*, *Lean Thinking*, *Are You Ready to Buy a House*, and a dozen others on business, healthcare, medicine, engineering, and the environment.



Board Member: Joen Kinnan

An IWOC member since 1986, Joen Kinnan has previously served as president and webmaster. Currently she is membership coordinator and *Stet* editor. She is a healthcare writer. She also writes articles and books and designs and writes newsletters.



Board Member: Catherine Rategan

Catherine Rategan is one of two co-founders of IWOC and a multiple award-winning writer, editor, production coordinator, and writing/speech coach. Before she began freelancing, she was an advertising copywriter and creative director. She writes for virtually all media.



Board Member: David Steinkraus

David Steinkraus is a relatively new independent writer, but he has many years of writing experience. He spent 27 years at newspapers, where reported on government, politics, medicine, the environment, and other issues. He also did editing, page design, and some photography.



Board Member: Laura Stigler

Laura Stigler is president of *Shebang!* Writing and Consulting. An award winner, she specializes in consumer, B2B, and retail and recruitment advertising /marketing. Her skills have brought her more than 150 clients. Previously she worked for J. Walter Thompson/Chicago.



Board Member: Stewart Truelsen

Stewart Truelsen has been a freelance writer and video producer since 2005 when he left a career in broadcast journalism and public relations. Currently program chair, he joined IWOC in 2009. He specializes in writing for agribusiness clients and producing videos for corporate events.



IWOC Welcomes
New Members
Tara Garcia Mathewson
Susan Hodges
Melanie Morgensen
Kathy Occhipinti

Did you know...



Do you have trouble buckling down and just writing?? We all waste time occasionally, but if viewing your friend's vacation pictures on Facebook gets in the way of that 20-page report, or you feel the call of Candy Crush when you should be editing, consider these anti-procrastination apps.

Finish (.99, iOS) – Plug in your to-do list based on short-term, mid-term or long-term time frames. “Bother Me” reminders allow you to set a time for a task. The reminder will ping every hour until the task is completed. You also have the ability to share tasks via e-mail, text message, Twitter, or Facebook.

Self Control (free, Mac) – an open source app where you block access to distracting websites or mail servers for a pre-determined amount of time.

Pomodoro (.99, iOS) – Based on the Pomodoro Technique of time management (see www.pomodortechnique.com), which basically sets up 25-minute blocks of working time with varying breaks, each of which is called a “pomodoro,” this app counts down backward and tracks the number of passed pomodoros. Also sends push notifications of when to take a break, even if the app is closed.

RescueTime Lite (free, Windows, iOS, Android) – Tracks your time in various applications and websites, allows you to set goals for the amount of time spent for certain activities, e-mails stats to you weekly.

— Katherine Mikkelsen



**REJOIN/JOIN IWOC NOW
DISCOUNT
UNTIL SEPTEMBER 15**

Stop what you're doing and listen to this fabulous exclusive offer for IWOC members! You all know that IWOC's yearly membership renewal drive runs from September 1 to October 1. But wait! **Renew by September 15 and lock in early-bird savings!** Pay just \$125 (regular \$140) for professional members, \$80 (regular \$90) for seniors aged 62 and older, and \$60 (regular \$70) for associates! What a deal! Read on to find out how to take advantage of these one-time savings! This opportunity won't be offered again this year! And it's only available to you savvy early birds, so don't delay!

Renewal is so simple, you'll be itching to get to your computer! Just follow these easy steps: **1.** go to iwoc.org; **2.** click “view profile and log in with your e-mail address and password”; **3.** click “Renew until 1 Oct 2014.” **4.** Check out your profile and edit *anything* you want! And, listen to this! You get **six free** areas of expertise/specialties, but you can boost this to **nine if you're on a committee or the board!** What a fantastic opportunity!

But wait! There's even more: Bring in a new member any time during the entire membership drive (September 1 to October 1) and get **three more free listings!** (New members pay either the

early-bird rate or the regular rate, depending on whether they join before or after September 15.)

But wait! There's still more! You can choose as many categories as you want for an additional charge! **Wow! Just count your extras and click on the appropriate extra-listings package at the bottom of the form. This step is absolutely necessary to ensure you pay the correct amount. If you change nothing, and you choose the same extras as you had last year, the package will already be clicked, but check it to be sure it's correct.**

You don't want to miss this exclusive deal! No shipping and handling fee! An entire year's worth of worldwide advertising! Writers' Line! Stet! Informative meetings! Parties! Networking! And more! Early-bird savings are available only until **September 15**, so don't delay for the best deal!

DISCLAIMER: The IWOC website is not smart like you, and it doesn't know whether you've taken more than your free category allotment unless you tell it by clicking on the correct extra-listings package, so IWOC assumes no responsibility if, in the event you underpay, the Membership Coordinator sends a goon to slap you upside the head for making it necessary to dun you for additional payment. ■

— Joen Kinnan

ADDENDUM TO THE ABOVE:

Never let it be said that IWOC doesn't practically dress you and feed you. If you want a foolproof method of calculating exactly how much you owe including “extras,” use this link to bring up a handy calculator designed by our peerless webmaster: <http://iwoc.org:80/resources/Documents/IWOC-Extra-Listing-Package-Calculator.xls>. This will open an Excel file. Plug in your numbers, and the calculator will do the rest. ■

September Meeting Preview

Roger Rueff leads a double life as a chemical engineer and technical writer by day and an award-winning playwright-cum-screenwriter by night. He called upon his dramatic background to write *Discovering the Soul of Your Story*, an innovative approach to story development. With the help of his graphic-artist son and some reader-editors, Roger wrote, designed, and typeset this book, as well as a collection of poetic proverbs titled *Fifty Things I Want My Son to Know*. He recently served as the lead writer for the European Union Health Programme animated Web series Boys & Girls.

Writing and publishing a book require subject matter expertise, audience identification, planning an approach, market determination, research, and organizing—and, of course, that's all before any actual writing begins. Figur-

ing out the focus, tone, pace, and voice that you choose to follow come next. At first the process appears to involve a considerable investment of time and effort, but our panelists will offer techniques and perspectives that can allow you to integrate your book writing into your normal work week. They'll also reveal some tips about how to sell your book once it's printed.

The payoff to publishing a book yourself can translate not only into self-satisfaction but also into significant, measurable client development and profit. Whatever your topic (and we all have a bestseller in mind, right?), it's possible to start the journey immediately—today. Social media enable you to begin laying the marketing groundwork by blogging and tweeting about what interests you and commenting on what others are saying and doing.

“Writer’s block is a fancy term made up by whiners so they can have an excuse to drink alcohol.”
— **Steve Martin**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1.

Whether it's a how-to, novel, history, or business model, learn how to turn your expertise into a bound book. Can't you see it already in the window of your neighborhood bookstore?

We'll see you on Tuesday, September 10, in the Page Smith Room of the Gratz Center, 120 East Delaware Place. Conversation and networking (with free snacks) begin at 5:00, the program starts at 6:00; we'll wrap up a little after 7:00. There will be a very short business meeting preceding the program.

Plan to join your new and familiar friends at Frankie's Restaurant just across Michigan Avenue in the Hancock Center for a buy-you-own dinner (great affordable menu!) and much more conversation. There's self-parking in the 900 Michigan (Bloomingdale's) garage across Delaware from the Gratz Center; enter from Walton or Rush Streets a few minutes after 5:00 for a discounted rate of \$6.00. Be sure to have the Gratz Center receptionist validate your parking ticket for the discount. Several buses stop just a few steps away. ■

— **Jim Kepler**

In the next issue. . .



- **October 8, IWOC/LinkedIn Group Mixer.** Meet and mingle with those who've visited the site.
- **President's column:** A new president and a new column. Don't miss Jim Kepler's initial offering. It's sure to be interesting.
- **Helpful tips on software, hardware, and/or just plain biz practices, and much more.**

