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Drop Kick Me, Jesus, Through the Goal Posts of Life

Or, How I Reinvented My Life Again and Again and Again

I LANDED MY first editorial job in the last century as a college sophomore, apprenticed to the chief copy editor in a New York publishing house. I worked summers, vacations, and off terms, and by graduation, I knew how to line edit fiction and nonfiction manuscripts. I could only be considered for secretarial jobs when I moved into Boston publishing.

This was the 1970s, the last gasp of a truly feudal culture in the midst of the public-school bussing wars. Young women in publishing typed while men read and lunched. One editorial secretary had recently been appointed editor, the first in the company's 175-year history, but more than a hundred years after the Civil

out to United Electrical Workers and had a 1930s, IWW, *Tortilla Flat*-like dance with pink-collar labor organizing. Thanks to LBJ's Great Society, the U.S. Supreme Court, and *Griggs v. Duke Power Company's* expansion of Title VII and the 1965 Civil Rights Act, the company adopted salary ranges with job descriptions. Nonetheless, when I applied for senior editor, it took me many go-rounds to "convince" my 19th-century-minded managers that *senior* did not mean "old."

I was in my early thirties. The fiction and nonfiction books I acquired and the authors I edited proved how good I was at my profession. At last I had arrived: 60-hour work weeks made me happy. Alas, I reported to an editorial executive who ate colleagues for breakfast. While I lasted longer than most, I too was fired. I fell off my career ladder and landed really, really hard. Eventually I cashed in my corporate life and left the country with two carry-on bags and a copy of *Middlemarch*. I climbed 10,000 feet up and around central Africa's Virunga mountains to look deep into the eyes of mountain gorillas. I sat in the rainforest for hours with them, watching the famous primatologist watching the famous primates. I read George Eliot for days, lying on crowded hard-seat trains yo-yo-ing across the People's Republic of China not long

after the end of the Cultural Revolution. These experiences flipped my personal values to favor life, liberty, and the pursuit of meaning.

Back in Boston when the elastic in my underpants had stretched out and my creditors had found me, I stepped right into the burgeoning women-in-print movement. Women's Studies had recently been invented. Women's presses sprang up in the 1980s and 1990s from India to the Pacific Rim, across Anglophone and Francophone Africa,

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PHOTO COURTESY ANITA MCCLELLAN



The McClellans in 2006: 13-year-old Iona Xiaolu, Anita, 6-year-old Nina Xiaoyang, and our Airedale, Taffy, aged 6.

War no people of color held desk jobs, Jews in publishing worked out of New York branch offices, and pregnant working women quit in the first trimester and reapplied when the children were in elementary school. I reached chief copy editor to discover that I was working at just \$500 more per year than my best-paid staffer. When I became an acquisitions editor, the hiring manager explained with a straight face how lucky I was, and by the way, my exact, then-salary of \$9,678.27 gross per year was the same as that of my new position. I reached



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Kick Me Through the Goal Posts, Jesus*Continued from page 1*

through Eastern and Western Europe, across North and Latin America. In the U.S. and Canada, women booksellers provided feminist-filtered, independent retail outlets for feminist books, magazines, newspapers, authors, communities, and conferences across the continent. Women in print around the world organized migrating, grass roots, locally funded, biannual, week-long international feminist book fairs to buy and sell book rights, eat and drink, dance and party, compare publishing notes, and hawk feminist writing to the public at large.

The fairs were held on different continents and hemispheres and staffed wholly by hundreds of volunteers, of which I was one. Tiny women-owned and -run presses and distributors across the English-language world were finding the writers, making the acquisitions, and reaching the consumers that male-stream publishers were not capable of doing.

The consumer market for feminist books expanded into a crossover market for course books in brand-new academic disciplines. It was a prairie fire. Under the mentorship of the managing director of London's The Women's Press, I became a literary agent who linked feminist press owners with hungry U.S. corporate publishers and university presses. The fax machine made print communications instantaneous, from sample chapters to rights contracts. The personal computer made publishing a desktop matter. Finally the Internet made the world into a village. No operator had to be big or famous to do business in this late-20th-century publishing world. It was all about content.

UK women in publishing pulled off annual Feminist Book Fortnights when bookshops and book-chat media across the United Kingdom featured homegrown feminist books, authors, and events for two solid weeks in an orgy of reviewing, chatting, and handselling. At Barcelona's Feminist Book Fair all the subways and buses and billboards were papered with advertisements for the Feminist Book Fair, radio ads announced

it nonstop for eight days, entire (chain-smoking) Catalonian families attended; carloads of women, children, and men arrived from all corners of Europe to buy, to read, to write, to talk, to schmooze feminists and their work. Heady times. In Boston, even today, that kind of municipal resources are reserved for the annual Boat, Car, and Home shows and for the Red Sox.

My Airedale terrier, Taffy, commuted with me and we went swimming on summer afternoons after work. I was employed in a non-hierarchical, person-affirming, entrepreneurial work culture with retirement and benefits. At Wellesley College's Center for Research on Women I shared offices with social scientists of all ages, cultures, genders, preferences, identities centered on women's lives, women's

work, families, and communication. A lot about how families could be built and how they thrived rubbed off on me.

In middle age I traveled back

to the People's Republic of China as a single by choice, adopting mother of a 12-month-old infant, Iona Xiaolu. Nine years later, my fourth grader and I returned to mainland China together to bring home her 29-month-old sister, Nina Xiaoyang. Me and she and baby made three along with a mortgage, a dog, two cats, two tanks of fish, work that I loved. Then the women in print movement in the U.S. suffocated to death from online and other environmental economics, and the office was closed down.

I had to put a work life together yesterday with health insurance while keeping on keeping on. I joined many professional organizations; built a Web site; joined discussion lists; got a laptop; cleared off the daybed and the spare room; and rolled up my sleeves to begin all over again, this time solidly in 21st-century publishing as a freelancer. EFA and the Internet, where would I be today without you?

—Anita D. McClellan

Anita D. McClellan, recently renewed member of EFA, is a freelance writer and literary consultant (www.anitamcclellan.com) working out of Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Me and she and baby made three along
with a mortgage, a dog, two cats, two
tanks of fish, work that I loved.

How We Began

THIRTY-SIX YEARS AGO, in the winter of 1970, “editors at Grove Press went on strike in an effort to make the publishing industry more responsive to their needs. Two Grove editors who found themselves freelancing again—Mary Heathcote and Cicely Nichols—met with freelancers Faith Sale, Louise Stallard, and Margaret Wolf to discuss the situation, and predicaments, of freelancers” (from a letter from Cicely Nichols to Trumbull Rogers and Martin Kohl, Sept. 1999). As any long-time EFA member knows, this is the short version of how the present organization was born. Of this group of Founding Mothers, four (Mary Heathcote, Louise Stallard, Margaret Wolf, and Faith Sale) have died, and one—Cicely Nichols—is alive, though it has recently come to the attention of EFA’s Board of Governors that she is seriously ill.

It is probably a good idea to recount the story of EFA’s founding every few years, so newer members can become aware of our origin, and to remind the rest of us of how we began. Like many organizations, our beginning was small and uncertain. However, that first meeting must have struck a chord, because, as Carol L. O’Neill and Avima Ruder wrote in *The Complete Guide to Editorial Freelancing* (Barnes & Noble Books, 1974, now out of print), “Freelancers on occasion complain of loneliness, of being cut off from the mainstream of publishing—and from human contact. There is no organization where freelancers can meet to talk shop and exchange experiences, to share triumphs and gripes.” In fact, at the time, this book was the only centralized source of information about the editorial freelancing profession, a role that EFA was already assuming and expanding. Of course, when we became aware of this phrase, we wrote the publisher, and the next printing duly contained a mention of our existence. In fact, when I joined EFA in 1977, freelancers still fiercely guarded such information as the names of their clients and the rates they charged—even where to find editorial flags, which editors used for queries and comments before the 3-M Company invented Post-Its. It was this barrier of paranoia that EFA eventually broke down. However, this is only part of the debt editorial freelancers owe to Cicely and her colleagues, who set the tone when they came together to discuss their situation and share information.

Yet EFA’s continued existence was by no means assured by the fact of those early meetings. As word of what they were up to began to spread from friend to friend, more and more freelancers showed up until the nascent group outgrew people’s apartments. Then, in 1977, attempts to unionize Macmillan led to another strike, which in turn led to a schism in EFA’s leadership, because a group led by Faith Sale, Margaret Wolf, and a former Macmillan editor named David Sachs, thought EFA should become a union. As a result, they eventually founded a short-lived splinter organization—they held perhaps three meetings—which they called Freelance Editorial Workers Inc. Others in EFA, including Cicely, Mary Heathcote, Mary Barnett, and Jeannine Ciliotta, opposed this unionizing effort, feeling “the clout for a successful union was not present” (from Nichols letter, 1999) and so establishing a stable organization first should be the goal. When I joined EFA, there were still those in the organization who were for turning the group into a union, but the prevailing opinion was that if we wanted to have any influence at all on publishers, we needed to become a responsible, professional society, and in order to attract members, we had to offer services to the members, including a better place to network and socialize than the school cafeteria where EFA was, at the time, holding its general meetings.

I can recall coming in contact with Cicely only twice after I joined. The first time was when I told Mary Barnett, a friend of Mary Heathcote’s, that I wanted to do something in the organization. She suggested I talk to Cicely, who was at the time editing the newsletter. Cicely asked me to write an article on Mark Green’s (he was then New York City’s ombudsman) push to pass a law that all legal documents had to be written in plain English. EFA’s leadership thought such a law could result in work for freelance editors and proofreaders, but the article never materialized. Also about that time, after seven years of service to EFA, Cicely decided to focus her energies on other aspects of her life. Then, a year or so after I became program co-chair with Dorothy Macdonald (an indexer), Cicely contacted me with an idea she had. This was the time of the Tall Ships, one of which was to be a replica of a small Revolutionary War ship, *Providence*, which had been part of Maryland’s naval contribution to the cause. The *Providence* would be taking people on sails up the Hudson River, and Cicely offered to organize rides for EFA members, their

Continued on page 7

Calendar

Thursday, September 14

General Meeting

Editing for the Web

More info: www.the-efa.org

Monday, September 18

Scrabble Night, 6–9 P.M.

Wordplay with freelance colleagues and friends. Contact Elizabeth Parry, Elizabeth_Parry@ziffdavis.com

Thursday, October 12

General Meeting

Getting Your Act Together: Organizing Your Office, Your Computer, and Your Time

More info: www.the-efa.org

Monday, October 23

Scrabble Night, 6–9 P.M.

More wordplay. Contact Elizabeth Parry, Elizabeth_Parry@ziffdavis.com

Unless otherwise specified, meetings, special events, and affinity groups begin promptly at 6:15 P.M. in the EFA offices, Suite 1910, 71 West 23rd Street (networking for 30–45 minutes beforehand).

Affinity groups usually meet once a month; the schedule and meeting topics are announced on the Web site or by e-mail to members. Contact the office or affinity group leaders for late-breaking information on dates, topics.

Affinity Groups and Leaders:

New Freelancers

Margaret L. Moser

margaret.moser@verizon.net

Tuesday, September 19

Freelancers Approaching Career Transitions (FACT)

Turning Ageism on Its Head

David Hall

davidrhall@earthlink.net

Laurie Lewis

lewislaurie@earthlink.net

Please check the Web site (www.the-efa.org) for up-to-the-minute announcements of EFA meetings and events coast to coast.

As the EFA’s newspaper of record, *The Freelancer* often includes in the calendar events which will have already taken place when you receive it.

New Members

NEW MEMBERS

July 19–September 15, 2006

Ardman, Perri Port Ewen, NY
 Baker, Karen Budd Lake, NJ
 Barker, Scott Bridgewater, MA
 Bay, Samara New York, NY
 Berlyne, Deborah Rockville, MD
 Buoy-McCray, Barbra
 Jakarta, Indonesia
 Byrne, Dennis Northbrook, IL
 Carraher, Heather Eugene, OR
 Clark, Robert New York, NY
 Cook, Karen Brooklyn, NY
 Crenna, Leslie Placerville, CA
 Efken, Meredith Omaha, NE
 Helgoe, Laurie, PhD,
 Charleston, WV
 Hydue, Dotti Morriston, FL
 James, Fred New York, NY
 Jett, Dawn Queen Creek, AZ
 Kleist, Gwen Crestline, CA
 Kugler, Elizabeth Wayland, MA
 Lawson, Pamela Brooklyn, NY
 Martinez, Lionel New York, NY
 Mason, Aaron New York, NY
 McClellan, Anita Belmont, MA
 Mitchell, Donn Princeton, NJ
 Moulton, Linda Springfield, IL
 Moussalli, Carole Watertown, MA
 Passero, Barbara Belmont, MA
 Payne, Elaine High Ridge, MO
 Rawleigh, Carol Julian, NC
 Retkwa, Kathryn Iselin, NJ
 Rieseberg, Rhonda
 Bloomington, IN
 Rudolph, Jennifer Washington, DC
 Russell, Peter Tampa, FL
 Sherwood, Nina Lanoka Harbor, NJ
 Singer, Laura Trumbull, CT
 Sisson, John Newton, MA
 Smith, Cheryl Port Angeles, WA
 Steinberg, Sarah San Francisco, CA
 Stradley, Suzanne New York, NY
 Tonelli, Nicholas East Stroudsburg, PA
 Valentine, Michael Salisbury, MA
 Watson, Zell Brooklyn, NY
 Watstein, Andi South Amboy, NJ
 Wolf, Molly Ontario, Canada

Affinity Groups

Veteran freelancers inaugurate new affinity group

Retirement? Off the radar screen. Many experienced freelancers can't manage to take even a short vacation, let alone quit working entirely. Others have had to put their working lives on hold, sometimes for long periods, while caring for family members. For many of them, getting back into the freelance game has not been easy, despite decades of experience.

This is the picture that emerged in the first meeting of EFA's new affinity group, Freelancers Approaching Career Transitions (FACT). Intended for seasoned freelancers, this group had its inaugural meeting at EFA headquarters on August 8.

The group truly was a seasoned one. More than half of the 19 people in attendance had been freelancing for 20 years or longer. The others all had at least 10 years of freelancing under their belts. With all this experience, of course, comes the passage of years. Many attendees freely admitted that they couldn't multi-task as adeptly as they could when younger. But this didn't prevent them from actively pursuing business.

For the most part, these veterans are happy with their choice of freelancing, although many expressed a strong desire to pursue

other interests as well. Some have taken on steady though unstimulating work so they have a base income, hoping this will make it possible for them to follow their passions. "Freelancing is a means to an end" was a phrase echoed around the group. But other freelancers talked about being on a treadmill, having to work constantly just to make ends meet. A few had accepted staff jobs, usually part-time, for the paycheck and benefits.

What surprised the co-chairs of the FACT group, David Hall and Laurie Lewis, was the lack of retirement plans in this group of people nearing or beyond traditional retirement age. One of the reasons for forming this group was so freelancers, who usually have to fly solo when trying to put together a personal package of workplace perks, like insurance and retirement plans, could explore options with others in a similar position. But the attendees at the initial FACT meeting were more interested in recharging their careers than in phasing them down. Some said they *never* plan to retire, provided their health holds out.

Those who had taken time off to serve as caregivers—about one fourth of the attendees—seemed to share a common experience. When their caregiving responsibilities were over, these freelancers found it difficult to rebuild their businesses. The problem wasn't just the loss of contacts but also, in part, an issue faced by other freelancers who never took

time off: attitudes of the younger staff who hand out assignments, who often discriminate, subtly or overtly, against freelancers many years their senior. Ageism generated so much interest in this first FACT meeting that it is the topic of the next meeting, on Tuesday, September 19.

—Laurie Lewis

Long-time member Lewis is a former co-executive director, a frequent instructor on pricing strategies in the education program, and author of *What to Charge: Pricing Strategies for Freelancers and Consultants* (Aletheia Publications, 2000).



*"What I did on My Summer Vacation:
 A Mystical Journey of Sexual Awakening."*

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Nuances of networking: you're never alone

On Wednesday, July 19, 2006, 12 new EFA members hailing from Utah to New York participated in a teleconference on "Nuances of Networking." Twenty-year EFA member David Hall hosted, expertly supported by Sheila Buff, who initiated the EFA JobList and discussion e-mail groups. Hall and Buff explained the importance of networking, detailed how-to-network procedures, and illuminated the rich networking resources available through the EFA.

Networking is the lifeblood of freelancing. To help teleconference participants understand this, David Hall quoted "Metcalf's Law" (formulated by Robert Metcalfe, an Internet pioneer): the value of a telecommunications network increases in proportion to the number of its users squared, that is, a network of six users is not just three times, but nine times, as valuable as a network of two. Hall also referred to computer scientist David Reed's supplementary law: the value of a social network increases proportional to the number of sub-networks within it. Hall says, "It's not the size [of a network] but the way people organize themselves into sub-networks ... and exchange information within them" that produces social capital for individuals.

EFA provides multifold opportunity for networking and sub-networking (see the EFA Web site, www.the-efa.org). Its affinity groups connect members who have common needs (e.g., the New Freelancers group and the Freelancers Approaching Career Transitions [FACT] group). Its 12 regional chapters link members within geographical areas. Its 650-member discussion list, available to EFA members via a link with Yahoo!, provides a fact-sharing pool for issues ranging from résumé preparation to job contracts to protecting office equipment during a storm; it also helps members find each other and develop their own informal affinity groups. The EFA directory (sign up online using your EFA ID number) lists members by geographical location, subject specialties, and skills. Besides helping members connect, it is a resource for those employers who would rather search freelancer directories than advertise on a job bulletin.

Another powerful networking avenue is the EFA JobList, available to members for a modest extra fee of \$40.00 per year. It is useful not only for the job listings themselves. Dave Hall advises, "Note what companies list the kind of jobs you're interested in and just go ahead and submit a résumé [to those companies], because that's your market." Sheila Buff adds, "Anybody who's a repeat lister is someone who uses freelancers, and you can contact them independently" and so develop a personal network of clients. An amusing example of how client networking can function came from long-time EFA member Trudy Balch, whose testimonial Dave Hall quoted to the teleconference participants: "I approached company A, who recommended Ms. X at company B. I could never get her on the phone, but a few months later she recommended me to company C, who hired me!" One can never tell when connections will spark, but surely the more connections there are, the better!

To list all the networking sources imparted in that one teleconference goes far beyond the scope of this article, but here's a summary of sources not covered above:

- directories (examples: *The Literary Market Place* and *Publishers Marketplace*, or specialized directories for fields such as medicine, pharmaceuticals, etc., accessible at libraries)—note that you can also list yourself in these directories;
- listings available at a business library such as the one in Brooklyn Heights: advertising and public relations firms often outsource their publications to publishers who use freelancers;
- job lists (e.g., EFA's, www.craigslist.org, www.mediabistro.com);
- other organizations (e.g., Freelancers Union in the New York tristate area);
- trade Web sites (www.publishersmarketplace.com, for example);
- your own Web site (set it up using free software available from Yahoo!);
- and again, other freelancers, whose tips and information pool cannot be too highly valued.

Hunker down to the Internet and start exploring. Join the EFA discussion list. Use EFA's JobList. Join the affinity groups. Take advantage of teleconferences as they occur, or courses offered

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Classifieds

FRUSTRATED OR NEW PC

USER: I'll help you learn the Web, e-mail, Windows, Microsoft Word, folder/file organization. Specializing in individual training. Harriet Serenkin, 212-769-1506.

LEARN TO INDEX. 3-cassette video—\$159+s&h. Indexers make about twice as much as proofreaders, 50 percent more than copy editors—and they are in demand. Includes lots of info on how to find work and run a successful freelance business—plus lifetime phone support. See *Is Indexing for You?* at www.abbington.com/holbert or call toll free 877-408-7299

HOW LONG DO YOU WAIT TO

GET PAID? Immediate Financing. Photo Associates, Inc., for 30 years the financiers to the Graphic Arts Industry. Immediate payment for your invoices, and/or purchase orders, or completed assignments. You bill your clients and Photo Associates provides the working capital. Photo Associates services the graphic arts & advertising industries. Copywriters, TV & film production, photographers, writers, art directors, designers, illustrators, stylists, hair & makeup artists, cartoonists, and of course, wordsmiths. (Ask us about "check clearance") PHOTO ASSOCIATES, INC. 347 Fifth Ave., NYC 10016. TEL 212-889-7620, FAX 212-889-7645, www.photoas.biz

Classified ads are accepted on a first-come, space-available basis. \$2/line (approx. 28 characters); 10% discount on yearly (6-issue) contract. Copy to EFA office, petulatwo@juno.com, attn: M. Ratcliffe.

Correction

In "Narrative Nonfiction: The Power of Story" in the July–Aug issue, a statement attributed to Sandeep Jauhar, M.D., "I wrote a story based on my family's medical problems, and I got thousands of e-mails," was made by Paul Raeburn. We apologize for the error.

Hamlet's Cat's Soliloquy

To go outside, and there perchance to stay
 Or to remain within: that is the question:
 Whether 'tis better for a cat to suffer
 The cuffs and buffets of inclement weather
 That Nature rains on those who roam abroad,
 Or take a nap upon a scrap of carpet,
 And so by dozing melt the solid hours
 That clog the clock's bright gears with sullen time
 And stall the dinner bell. To sit, to stare
 Outdoors, and by a stare to seem to state
 A wish to venture forth without delay,
 Then when the portal's opened up, to stand
 As if transfixed by doubt. To prowl; to sleep;
 To choose not knowing when we may once more
 Our readmittance gain: aye, there's the hairball;
 For if a paw were shaped to turn a knob,
 Or work a lock or slip a window-catch,
 And going out and coming in were made
 As simple as the breaking of a bowl,
 What cat would bear the household's petty plagues,
 The cook's well-practiced kicks, the butler's broom,
 The infant's careless pokes, the tickled ears,
 The trampled tail, and all the daily shocks
 That fur is heir to, when, of his own free will,
 He might his exodus or entrance make
 With a mere mitten? Who would spaniels fear,
 Or strays trespassing from a neighbor's yard,
 But that the dread of our unheeded cries
 And scratches at a barricaded door
 No claw can open up, dispels our nerve
 And makes us rather bear our humans' faults
 Than run away to unguessed miseries?
 Thus caution doth make house cats of us all;
 And thus the bristling hair of resolution
 Is softened up with the pale brush of thought,
 And since our choices hinge on weighty things,
 We pause upon the threshold of decision.

—Shakespeare
 (attributed to Jack Kolb,
 Dept. of English, UCLA,
 (1919-2006))

Use Public Relations to Build Your Business

EVERY FREELANCER IS a business owner. Your business is you. To build business, you need to get the word out.

If you want to be more profitable in the near future, the two main roads are advertising and public relations. Those with a big budget should go for advertising. But frankly most freelancers don't have the dollars for a full rollout. Be smart and use small local ads, making sure to place them frequently. You'll get both a better rate as well as better results that way. The secret to success with advertising is repetition.

Don't forget that your Web site or blog is an online ad—use the real estate to make it clear to potential clients how your work will benefit them. Update online information regularly to get return visitors. An online newsletter or a tip sheet is a good way to show your skills to your best advantage.

Assuming you don't have deep pockets, pursue publicity. Traditional avenues include sending out press releases, pitch letters, and fact sheets. Use media directories such as Bacon's, Burelle's, or Gebbie's to get in touch with the press. They're costly to buy, but are usually available at your local business library. Reading through the different categories will help you discover publications and broadcast outlets that are new to you.

Check sites such as www.craigslist.org and www.mediabistro.com as well as local business publications to find events where members of the media are speaking. Take the opportunity to hear them, and make sure to thank them at the end of the presentation. Don't try to promote yourself to them at this time though. When you contact them, through mail or by phone, refer to the meeting and mention something about their topic that you found useful. The personal touch can make a big difference.

As EFA members, you have another important reason to understand how publicity works. You can use your PR expertise and your writing and editing skills to prepare lucrative promotional materials including biographies, company histories, brochures, and Q & As for clients. You can make even more money if you're able to pitch stories as well as write them. The more you know about the PR process, the better equipped

you are to build your own business and those of others.

To partner with both clients and the media, start sending handwritten notes. In an e-mail world, this will make you stand out. Another way to separate yourself from others is to send Thanksgiving or Valentine's Day cards, rather than Christmas cards. A simple "I am thankful for your business," or "I love working with you," makes a telling point. Go further by connecting with someone with graphic skills and you can each double your business and double the attention you receive from the media.

Remember, your goal is to get the word out and bring the business in.

—**Laurel Tielis**

Laurel Tielis is the author of The Girl's Guide to Getting On Top: Positioning Your Business Through Media Placements (\$14.95), which can be ordered online from Amazon or Barnes & Noble or from your local bookseller. Laurel Tielis can be reached at (917) 325-3963.

Nuances of Networking

Continued from page 5

at the EFA or elsewhere. Give yourself a creative business name and bring your business cards to the EFA meetings (order 250 cards from www.vistaprint.com and pay nothing but shipping!). Hit the libraries. Sign up for directory listings. Sow those networking seeds, and reap the networking harvest. Not only is there a good living in doing so, but groups and subgroups of clients and support make the freelancer's world go 'round.

—**Reine Bethany and Judy Diamondstone**

Reine Bethany is a freelance writer and editor, home schooling mom, and adjunct composition teacher. She lives with her husband and family on Long Island, an hour's drive from New York City.

Judy Diamondstone is a writer and researcher now living in Massachusetts. She is currently working on contract with Newbridge Publications in Northborough, a company that allows her the flexibility to teach an odd course, go on interviews, and juggle additional commitments.

A Tribute to Cicely Nichols

THAT EFA SURVIVED as a stable, professional organization is a testament to the work of a handful of people. At the time of EFA's development, there were several distinct and incompatible visions of what EFA would become. Mary Heathcote and Cicely Nichols were the two who deserve most of the credit for steering the EFA ship to where it is today.

That nautical metaphor is more than apt in describing Cicely Nichols's work and interests. In addition to her love of books and clear communications, Cicely loved the rivers running around the City of New York. In the earliest years of this organization, Cicely lived in a Greenwich Village apartment with her teenage children. That apartment was the location of some of the informal meetings early in EFA's history.

Later she moved to a houseboat docked at a Hudson River marina. She kept the apartment, though. After all, nobody ever gives up a rent-controlled apartment in New York. I remember hearing her voice on a radio news program, when she was the press spokesperson for New York Waterways, announcing a new ferry connecting Manhattan with New Jersey.

Cicely was the speaker at the first meeting I attended of the nameless organization that soon became the Editorial Freelancers Association. It was in October 1976. Cicely had just won a decision by a New York State Department of Labor appeals board, which granted her unemployment insurance after she lost a regular assignment for freelance copyediting from McGraw-Hill.

With the assistance of an attorney from Legal Services (who also spoke at the meeting), she appealed the initial decision denying her unemployment compensation. We all know that freelancers are not entitled to unemployment compensation, right? Well, it depends. Since she had the regular assignment for a long time, probably several years, providing her a regular predictable income, under the supervision of the Editorial Services Department of McGraw-Hill, the appellate board ruled that she was, in effect, an employee entitled to the same protections as any other employee. These were unusual circumstances, so no legal precedent was set; freelancers still are not normally entitled to unemployment compensation. But even though we can't cite it in our own behalf, we can relish the satisfaction of Cicely's victory.

—*Elliot Linzer*

Elliot Linzer is a long-time EFA member and a former co-executive director.

How We Began

Continued from page 3

friends, and families at a reduced rate. After that, although I'd hear about her from time to time, Cicely ceased all active participation in EFA. This does not mean that she lost interest in EFA and its progress, as attested by the 1999 letter, which she wrote after viewing the new EFA Web site.

By the time of her retirement, however, her ideas and other participation had helped the group move well on its way toward becoming a viable professional organization. There was still a way to go, but membership was expanding annually and EFA was gaining the respect of publishers and their professional associations, including the American Association of University Presses (AAUP), with whom we put on a joint meeting. The first meeting I ran as program co-chair featured a talk by Herbert Mitgang, of *The New York Times*, who wrote about books and publishing, most notably articles opposing the increasing conglomeration in the industry. He mentioned EFA in a subsequent column, which resulted in a surge in membership. But it was EFA's focus on providing a place for members to socialize and exchange information—ideas that were the motivation for those five women to come together in 1970, and which Cicely and some others kept alive during EFA's formative years—that have allowed EFA to work and grow. This is why we need to remind ourselves of our origin and to continue to honor those who were there in the beginning.

—*Trumbull Rogers*

A long-time member of EFA, Trumbull Rogers has served as co-executive director and treasurer, and initiated the job phone service, precursor to today's JobList.

Publications

Grammatical Gleanings

Patricia M. Godfrey. Guidance on grammar and syntax, idiom and semantics, punctuation and typography.

The Freelancer's Bookshelf

Martin Kohl. A guide to standard, general, and specialized reference books.

Textbook Development as an Art and a Science

Carolyn Smith with Jeannine M. Ciliotta. Developing a college textbook, from concept to final manuscript.

A Freelance Editor's Guide to Book Production

Rachel Hockett Youngman. Manuscript to book: a step-by-step guide.

Copyright and Permissions: What Every Writer and Editor Should Know

Elsa Peterson. A summary of copyright law; also covers permissions editing and tips on finding permissions editing jobs.

Résumés for Freelancers

Sheila Buff. How to turn your traditional résumé into an effective marketing tool.

Filing Your Taxes as a Freelancer

(currently being updated) Jennifer Hackett. Step-by-step instructions on filling out the federal income tax forms that must be submitted by the typical freelancer.

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How Many Discussion List Members Does It Take to Change a Light Bulb?

- 1 to change the light bulb and to post that the light bulb has been changed
- 7 to share similar experiences of changing light bulbs and how the light bulb could have been changed differently
- 3 to caution about the dangers of changing light bulbs
- 1 to complain it should have been marked with a CHAT tag
- 2 to argue that it's not CHAT as light bulb changing is vital for HSE (Health, Safety, Environment) reasons
- 9 to point out spelling/grammar errors in posts about changing light bulbs
- 18 to argue over whether it's "lightbulb" or "light bulb"
- 6 to remind the 18 that the correct spelling is listed in the *Oxford Spelling Dictionary*
- 19 to post that this forum is not about light bulbs and to please take this discussion to a light bulb forum
- 11 to defend the posting to this forum saying that we all use light bulbs and therefore the posts are relevant to this forum
- 36 to debate which method of changing light bulbs is superior, where to buy the best light bulbs, what brand of light bulbs work best for this technique, and what brands are faulty
- 3 to post URLs where one can see examples of different light bulbs
- 4 to post that the URLs were posted incorrectly and then post the correct ones
- 3 to post about links they found from the URLs that are relevant to this group which makes light bulbs relevant to this group
- 13 to link all posts to date, quote them in their entirety including all headers and signatures, and add "Me too"
- 5 to post to the group that they will no longer post because they cannot handle the light bulb controversy
- 4 to say "didn't we go through this already a short time ago?"
- 13 to say "do a Google search on light bulbs before posting questions about light bulbs"
- 1 forum lurker to respond to the original post 6 months from now and start it all over again.

Adapted from a post to StEPLine forwarded to us by Matthew Seal, a member of StEP (Society for Editors and Proofreaders), EFA's UK counterpart



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