

# Writing for fun can grow into a full-time business

Do you have a talent that has yet to be pursued in a professional capacity? Do people often comment or compliment you on some skill that you take for granted?

Achieving professional success through the development of a natural talent or hobby often sounds too good to be true. After all, earning a substantial income from one's love of writing, or cooking, or organizing may sound ludicrous. But it happens all the time. As a newspaper columnist, I am often asked what steps are necessary to pursue either a part-

time writing career.

The Detroit Women Writers is an organization that has helped talented and serious writers since 1980 reach their potential and achieve publication. The group recently held its 27th annual writers conference at Oakland University. By bringing together nearly 500 Michigan writers, this group offered the opportunity to meet and mingle with industry experts, peers and others who have made the commitment to writing—not just for fun—but for profit.

For those interested in submitting



**focus: small business**  
**Mary DiPaolo**

non-fiction articles for publication, the query letter is the most important sales tool. According to Julie Candler, local free-lance writer and author, a query letter should be

structured so that editors will be convinced of three things: your subject matter will be of interest to the readership, you have the background and know-how to write the article,

and you write well.

Candler's articles on the automotive, travel and boating industries have appeared in Woman's Day, McCall's, Working Woman, Ms., and other publications. She advises would-be writers to "know the language of the writing business and use it. No one offers to make 'photos' available when 'glossies' is the buzzword to use." She adds that queries should be brief and creative. "The first few sentences must capture your reader's attention; if they don't you'll lose their interest almost immediately."

Information on rates paid for articles submitted to specific publications is available through the American Society of Journalists and Authors newsletter. Write the ASJA at 1501 Broadway, Suite 1007, New York, NY 10036.

Mary DiPaolo is the owner of MarkeTrends, a Farmington Hills-based business consulting firm. She is also producer and host of the cable television series, "Chamber Perspectives."

## late business news

Nortek Inc. is seeking anti-trust clearance under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Act to acquire more than 25 percent of Federal-Mogul Corp.'s shares. Nortek is a diversified company based in Providence, R.I.

Nortek is precluded from acquiring more than \$15 million of Federal-Mogul stock without receiving clearance under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Act.

Federal-Mogul Chairman and Chief Executive Thomas F. Russell said that he did not know whether Nortek currently owns any of its securities. "We intend to cooperate with the federal authorities reviewing the Nortek filing," Russell said. "We believe that significant anti-trust issues are raised by a possible Nortek acquisition of Federal-Mogul stock."

"Nortek has in the past contacted Federal-Mogul expressing interest in

our Huck operation, which makes high-technology fasteners used in commercial and military aircraft," he said. "Huck and Nortek's Monogram Division are by far the major producers of these highly specialized components which have applications in virtually every high-performance military aircraft now in production or under development."

Headquartered in Southfield, Federal-Mogul operates more than 40 plants, over 70 distribution centers and four research facilities throughout the world. Its products range from a variety of precision parts for the transportation, farm equipment, construction and manufacturing industries to aerospace components.

Detroit attorney Theodore Souris, winner of a disputed proxy election

to the R.P. Scherer Corp. board of directors, was formally seated last week, the pharmaceutical supply corporation said.

Souris was seated during the final session of Scherer's annual shareholders meeting, the Troy-based corporation said in a statement. Results of the proxy election he won Aug. 17 were accepted after the Delaware Court of Chancery ruled Oct. 5 against challenges filed by the corporation and the board candidate he defeated, the statement said.

"Today's seating of Souris marked a quiet end to the proxy contest undertaken last spring by Ms. Karla Scherer Fink and (John) Scherer, children of the company's founder," the statement said. "They announced their determination to generate maximum value for shareholders by convincing the board to explore the sale of the company."

John Scherer was re-elected to the board without contest. Souris's seating marked the first time the board was at full strength since Aug. 17, when he and New York investment banker Frederick Frank won the seats held by incumbent directors Peter Dow and Richard Manogian, the statement said.

R.P. Scherer manufactures gelatin capsules for the pharmaceutical and nutritional industries. It employs about 2,800 people at 22 facilities in 13 countries.

How does your company's absenteeism rate compare to other companies? Uniforce Temporary Services' recent survey found 82 percent of the survey companies have a 2-10 percent absentee rate. The remaining 18 percent reported an 11-

20 percent rate. Guaged on an annual 40-hour, five-day work week, the 18 percent have almost one full day of absence each week per employee.

When asked to rank the various causes of excessive absenteeism in order of importance, managers rated lack of supervisory attention to employees first, no standardized attendance policy second and lack of recognition/reward for good attendance third.

Job seeks, beware. The resume you mail may be harmful to your success. Olsten Services, a temporary help company, has found almost one-third of executives surveyed said they would reject a job applicant whose resume contained a typographical error.

Other findings: Male executives consider vocabulary to be their

strongest communications skill while female executives consider it their weakest; young executives think writing is much more important to success than their older colleagues do; 31 percent of male executives over 40 don't have a dictionary or other reference books in their offices; 60 percent of executives write business materials in longhand on paper; three out of four executives proofread all business letters their secretaries type; "accommodate" is the most frequently misspelled word, followed by "effect," "affect" and "commitment"; 63 percent of the Fortune 1000 companies surveyed offer programs to improve workers' communication skills.

The Associated Press contributed to this story.

## datebook

**CAREER FAIR**  
Thursday, Nov. 3 — Women's Advertising Club Career Fair begins at 5:30 p.m. in Bloomfield Hills. Fee: \$10. Information: Susan Bernardi, 644-0500.

**DIRECT MARKETING**  
Thursday, Nov. 3 — Direct Marketing Association of Detroit meets in Southfield. Fee: \$15. Information: 455-8911.

**PROFESSIONAL FUND-RAISERS**  
Friday, Nov. 4 — Michigan fundraising day conference 8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in Troy. Non-member fee:

\$145. Information: Jacquie Wetherholt, 296-8680. Sponsor: National Society of Fund Raising Executives.

**CPA TAX WORKSHOP**  
Monday, Nov. 7 — Annual Michigan tax workshop 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Bloomfield Hills. Fee: \$85. Information: 855-2288. Sponsor: Michigan Association of Certified Public Accountants.

**EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**  
Tuesday, Nov. 8 — "Establishing Employee Assistance Programs for Small Employers" offered 1-4 p.m. in Southfield. Information: Anne

Danielski, 443-0886. Sponsor: National Council on Alcoholism and Other Dependencies.

**SIMULTANEOUS ENGINEERING**  
Wednesday, Nov. 9 — Simultaneous Engineering conference noon to 4:30 p.m. in Southfield. Non-member fee: \$245. Information: Lori A. Navetta, 271-1500, Ext. 370. Sponsor: Society of Manufacturing Engineers.

**BUSINESS COMMUNICATORS**  
Wednesday, Nov. 9 — International Association of Business Communicators meets. Information: Kim

Welch, 588-7600.

**TRAINING SOCIETY**  
Wednesday, Nov. 9 — American Society for Training and Development meeting in Troy. Information: 532-7871.

**REAL ESTATE WOMEN**  
Wednesday, Nov. 9 — Commercial Real Estate Women meets. Information: Vicki Dallas, 652-6560.

**ADMINISTER RETIREMENT PLAN**  
Wednesday, Nov. 9 — "Establishing and Administering Retirement Plans: a Guide for CPAs and Attor-

neys" offered 8-10 a.m. or 4-6 p.m. in Birmingham. Free. Information: 642-4000. Sponsor: Center for Financial Planning Inc.

**EMPLOYEE RELATIONS LAW**  
Wednesday, Nov. 9 — Employee Relations Law Day 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in Troy. Fee: \$119. Information: 1-800-338-2299. Sponsor: World Computer Corp.

**STOCK MARKET'S FUTURE**  
Wednesday, Nov. 9 — "The Stock Market in an Election Year... Where Do We Go From Here?" begins at 7:30 p.m. in Bloomfield Hills.

Fee: \$10. Information: 645-3635. Sponsor: Cranbrook Schools.

**PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINAR**  
Wednesday, Nov. 9 — Pre-retirement and estate planning discussed at 7 p.m. at Birmingham Community House. Information: 827-1230. Sponsors: IDS Financial Services, Michael Morger and David Smith.

**AUTO CONFERENCE**  
Wednesday-Thursday, Nov. 9-10 — Automotive Manufacturing '88 held in Southfield. Information: 271-1500. Sponsor: Society of Manufacturing Engineers.



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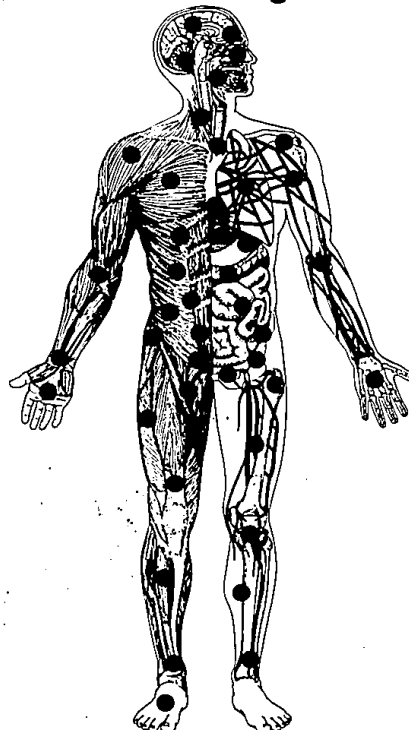
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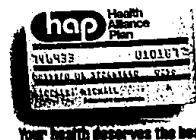
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