

Author writes survival plan for college days

By SHIRLEE IDEN

If you've ever thought you could write a book, take heart there's an author out there who agrees.

And Irv Brechner ought to know.

At age 15 he wrote the world's largest crossword puzzle and it was published.

"After that, I dreamed of getting a book published," he said in a Southfield interview.

During his four years in college, he thought of the idea again, especially in reference to the intense struggle and agony of being a freshman thrown into the realities of college.

"I thought back as a senior to the mistakes made in my first year and said to myself 'If I knew then what I know now, how much better it could have been.'"

The enterprising author turned out a manuscript on his trusty college typewriter and then went in search of a publisher.

"I couldn't find a conventional publisher to do it, so I just did it myself," he said.

"I typed it out on my Smith-Corona and took it to a local printer."

And then came the hard sell for "The College Survival Kit."

Brechner called producers of radio and television talk shows, he called book editors and managed to get an article published in the New York Times.

"AFTER THAT, the Today Show called me, and I was interviewed by Tom Brokaw," Brechner said. "He told me if he had my book when he was in college, it would have made life more bearable for him."

Brokaw also told him afterward that the network got 250 phone calls following the Brechner interview, something of a record.

The author contends his book has information that is usable for college freshmen and later in life as well.

"When I wrote it, I took it to my professors, and they all said it was great and filled a void," he said. "They approved of anything that would help kids take a mature approach to college."

Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., Brechner lives in West Orange, N.J., with his social worker wife, Kathi.

He has his own ad agency today and publishes "What's New?" a bi-monthly magazine about retail stores in Essex County, N.J.

A magna cum laude graduate of Seton Hall University, Brechner, 27, is taking night courses toward a masters in business administration.

Although mothers have customarily sent care packages of cookies and clean laundry with their children going off to college, today many are sending copies of "The College Survival Kit."

Brechner sold 20,000 copies of the manual on

his own and now has sold it to Bantam Books, who recently published it in paperback.

He said 70 percent of the sales are to parents. And one doctor bought 100 copies for his young patients.

He said he has had hundreds of letters from students and parents telling him how helpful the book has been.

"After all, parents are making a big investment in college and their youngster just at a time when the student is going far away and out of parental control," he said.

"The College Survival Kit" is designed to relieve new students and teach them how to cope with the unavoidable questions and problems they will encounter.

IT HELPS students learn how to select courses, how to study, how to write term papers, how to take exams and how to have a great social life at

the same time.

Brechner hopes his manual will be the one reference book that incoming freshmen cannot afford to be without.

"It wasn't hard to write because I was writing out of experience," the author said. "Anyone can write a book."

Brechner is so convinced of this that he plans another how-to book soon to be called "The Engagement Survival Kit."

The new book will do away with the pitfalls of failing in love, becoming engaged and working out all the adjustments between the two engaged people and their families.

Brechner said the odds of someone publishing a book on his own, as he did with "The College Survival Kit," and then selling it to a publisher, are about 15,000 to 1.

But Brechner is accustomed to success and can point to at least three coups so far. His first book, his one-man ad-

vertising agency and his magazine have all been successes.

"Success in college, as I say in my book, is man-

aging your time well," Brechner said. "But most important is to have fun with your work and enjoy life."



IRV BRECHNER

Y Tennis Club opens for fall

Memberships in the YWCA Tennis Club are available for the '79-80 season which opens after Labor Day at the Northwest Branch, 25940 Grand River.

The season runs from September through August.

The four-court facility, which has been in operation since 1976, is available for lessons, leagues, mixers and open court time to members.

Membership in the club is \$30 a year for adults; \$25 for teens and youth, or \$75 for a family. Y membership is necessary to join the club.

"The tennis house was built to provide Y members with the least expensive way to enjoy tennis," said Ruth Duey, a Y executive. "Our goal, which was to bring tennis out of the country club setting, is definitely being met."

Court fees are quite low compared to most racquet clubs, and the debt incurred in building the facility is being paid by proceeds from Saturday night bingo games.

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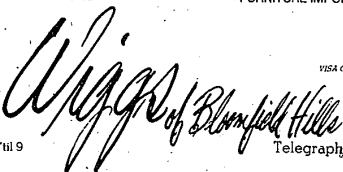


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