

# Stet

## Independent Writers of Chicago

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### OCTOBER MIXER PREVIEW

## IWOC and C3 are about to mix it up

October 14. Six o'clock. Write it down. Tie a string around your finger. Put it on your desk calendar.

You won't want to miss the IWOC-C3 Mixer at Marcello's Father and Son Italian Restaurant in Lincoln Park at 645 North Avenue. Why? Well, for starters, it's FREE! The boards of directors of both of our organizations have put this event together specifically so that you, our members, can expand your circle of contacts, find out what your colleagues have been up to lately, and pick up some clues about where you might find your next assignment. It's a chance to renew acquaintances and make new friends — and especially new contacts. There's nothing quite like sharing a meal and hoisting a drink with a colleague to bring out the networker in us all.

We'll eat. There'll be hot and cold appetizers; a bunch of different pizzas, including vegetarian; desserts (Marcello's is also a bakery); unlimited soft drinks; and a cash bar. As you'll recall, we've held previous mixers at Mar-

cello's, and the food has always been very plentiful and quite delicious.

We'll talk. That's the whole point, right? In our business, if you're not talking, you're not working. We live



by our contacts. Practice your elevator speech; bring a fistful of cards; be ready to ask questions, answer questions, offer suggestions, accept advice. IWOCers are wonderful people, we all know that. So are C3ers. But if we hang out only with the wonderful people we already know, we'll never find out how wonderful those other guys are.

We'll share. Find someone of like mind and explore the possibility of partnering on a project. Designers need writers, and writers need designers. Make it work, and everybody wins.

So, who exactly are these C3ers? As organizations we're roughly the same age, although C3 got a bit of a head start on IWOC. After about 25 years as Women in Design/Chicago, the organization changed its name and its focus and became Chicago Creative Coalition, which is now gender-blind and a source for creative advice, information, and support for small, creative-based business. Its aim is to engage its roster of designers, photographers, illustrators, copywriters, printers, webmasters, and other creative professionals and help them connect in person and online in order to swap stories, exchange referrals, and help promote the creative professions.

So come on down on Tuesday. It's free, but you do have to register online so we're sure to have enough of that terrific food. ■

— Jim Kepler

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# Happy New Year IWOC!

There are a couple of months left until the end of the calendar year, but it's already a new year for IWOC. At the annual meeting on Sept. 9, the members present elected a new slate of officers and directors for the coming

for one reason or another, and the core group carries on.

Although experienced members provide a reservoir of wisdom, a group that does not renew itself is not on the path of sustainability. Think of other groups you know. I'll bet many have gradually contracted until what remains is a handful of people who gather four times a year in someone's living room to drink coffee, reminisce, and decry what everyone else is doing wrong. IWOC is too valuable to slip into that fog.

People who make their living as writers or editors still need continuing professional education and networking, and people who want to enter our craft need all the help they can get. Indeed, the withering of media outlets makes IWOC more valuable than ever because it remains one of the few places where new writers can gain the training they used to receive from experienced editors and senior writers. As an organization, IWOC can add its voice to topics that affect all types of media and our members, such as the current debate about keeping the Internet equally open to all users or allowing people with money to have the best and fastest access while everyone else makes do.

In the spring, the board and some guests held a day-long retreat with a professional facilitator. We talked about how the media world has changed, the strengths IWOC has, and how it should adapt. We as-

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year. Some people have been on the board but are in new roles. That is true in my case as your new president. Fear not. I will spare you the political speech. We are all destined to be very tired of those very quickly if we aren't already. My "platform" is simpler: build IWOC. You may look about and believe everything is fine, but I disagree.

The numbers gathered in the recent business survey of Chicago writers' groups are clear: 84% of respondents were older than 46, and 67% were older than 56. IWOC members comprised just over half the people completing the survey. Many organizations start with enthusiasm, and the members age together. New people enter, but many drop away



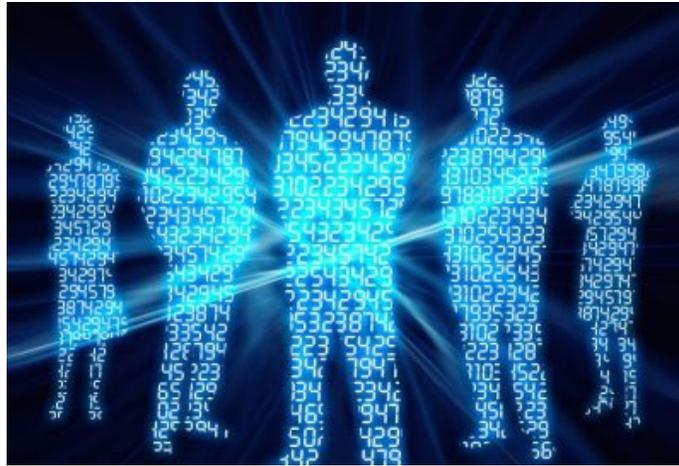
# President's Column CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2.

sembled task forces to address the needs of membership and communication with people outside IWOC — meaning in part the people who will pay us.

I do not intend to let this plan sit and decay as so many reports do, but vision is only part of a solution. It is necessary for guidance, but it does no work. That takes people — the board combined with all of you. Yes, I am asking something of you, but not much. I ask two things. First, invite someone who isn't a member to come to one of our meetings. This may be another writer you know, or someone writing part-time, or someone who is interested in writing but needs a little encouragement or knowledge for that first step. Second, if you have an idea for a program that would help you build your skills or your business, please tell us. Tell another member of the board, tell program committee chair Diana

Schneidman, or email me: [president@iwoc.org](mailto:president@iwoc.org).

I make one other request of you: Come to a meeting. We have several good programs coming that will provide practical help, and the people you meet may solve your prob-



lem, or you may solve one of theirs. October's meeting, for example, is a mixer with the Chicago Creative Coalition, a group of writers, designers, artists, photographers, illustrators, and film and video professionals.

Some futurists believe more and more people will be working in an economy of independent contractors hired by the project, and some of these projects will be completed by virtual companies, for example a writer, photographer, and designer forming a job-specific team. If you give credence to such forecasts, then you absolutely need to attend the mixer because you will meet the people for your virtual company. If you think the futurists are a bit off — sniffed too much exhaust from the personal jetpacks we were all supposed to be flying by now — come anyway. Extending your network never hurts, and the photographer you meet this month may call you in six months when she needs words to complete a project.

Instead of waiting to celebrate the end of the calendar year, join us now to celebrate and create a new year and a better year for IWOC. ■





## Get Paid: Via Your iPhone

Wouldn't it be nice to get paid when you want, and not when the client gets around to it? Well, you can with [Square](#). In simple terms, Square allows you to take payment (cash or card) anywhere, on your iPhone whenever you want.

When you sign up for Square, you receive a small card reader through the mail. The reader sits neatly in your headphone jack to take payments. You do pay a 2.9 percent fee for the service, but other than that there are no other costs. You can even email your customers their invoices on the spot so no paperwork is required. ■

— The editor

## You're kidding! There's an app for THAT?

How about an app that helped a guy survive an earthquake? It's true. He was injured and alone, but he used the first-aid app on his trusty iPhone to tend his wounds until help came. The app even told him to set reminders so he wouldn't sleep and go into shock. Earthquakes aside, a first-aid app could be helpful on a hike in a remote spot or even around the house. Try [St John's Ambulance First Aid](#) or [Pocket First Aid and CPR](#).

People have baby monitors in their homes, but the iPhone baby monitor goes with you. Get [CodeGoo's Baby Monitor](#) that will place an automatic phone call to the number you specify when the babe moves or cries.

So you're downtown, your hands are freezing, and you've forgotten

your gloves. No problem! Just turn your iPhone into a hand-warmer with the [Hands Heater](#) app. Hey, it may play havoc with your battery, but what's that compared to a couple of frozen fingers?

Have a guitar? Need a tuner? Ha! The [Guitar Toolkit](#) not only tunes your guitar, it also gives you the functionality of a metronome, and it comes with a chord library.



Here's an app for the good-time Charleys/Charlenes among us. If you're unsure whether you're fit to drive after that last mojito, get [DrinkTracker](#) to check your blood alcohol concentration. Better that than winding up with a

telephone pole in your lap. And it even tells you when it *will* be safe for you to get behind the wheel.

So now you're safe from a drunk-driving charge. Speeding is another matter, but never fear, [Trapster.com](#) is here, and it's available for any mobile device to warn you of the dreaded speed trap ahead.

There you are trying to hang a picture but you can't get it straight.



Don't bother looking for your level. You don't need it. Just whip out

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7.

## Appoet: Is There a “Hot Spot” in Your Future?

Joshua Fisher is, among other things, a poet, a writer, a world traveler, a published author, a graduate student at DePaul, and the CEO of Appoet. He has herded sheep, taught English in Korea, walked on the cliffs in Portugal where Prince Henry the Navigator had his school for navigators and Christopher Columbus is reputed to have studied before discovering the Americas. Fisher told us that he is always a student of wonder and these experiences have contributed to his wonder.

He created Appoet to bring writers and readers together geographically. He hopes to bring creativity to a location near you.

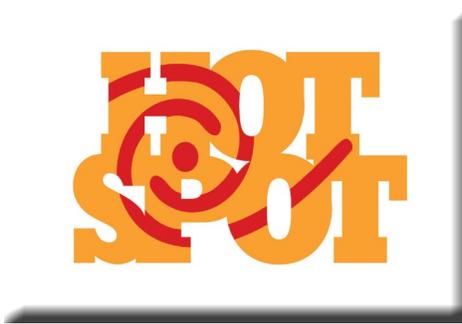


The idea for Appoet started when Fisher was coming back from Korea. There had been a death in the family, and he had not

been able to get home for the funeral. When he did get home he found he was left a box of love letters. He wanted to do something special with those letters that had been written by family members. He took those love letters and using sections of them created poetry. He read us one of the letters and then poems from his iPhone. The difference between the letter and the poem was both interesting and beautiful.

Appoet is a digital storyteller and publisher. It is also an application that is free and downloadable for IOS and Apple. A writer writes and uploads to

the application with an address. The story, piece, or poem is linked with the geographical location, called the “hot spot.” The end user has the application on his/her phone, so when he/



she walks or drives near a linked location – hot spot – the person receives a “push” notification and then can read or listen to the content. The end user can choose what types of notifications to get by genre. The writer can write about any place whether or not he/she is actually there at the time. All that’s necessary is to upload to the chosen address.

Fisher took questions from the audience. One of the first questions was about how to monetize the application. He told the group that the writer can look for a location that would be geographically close to a client and put client information at that address/hot spot.

One audience member noted that there could potentially be lots of story “spots” in Chicago and wondered if users would be overloaded. Fisher said that, though at the moment users can get notifications based only on genre, they are working on semantic notifications as well. So users will have a greater choice of notifications.

There was a question about spam. The users police spam. Users can flag undesirable content and report it to Infused, and Infused will take appropriate action on the content.

Another audience member asked how this application differs from Facebook Place or Foursquare and how we could use the application to work with our clients. Fisher responded that those other applications are great repositories for digital contact but only exist in that place and must be deliberately opened whereas Appoet notifies users when they are near a hotspot. The range of a hot spot (the geographical location where writers post content) is 20 feet to about half a city block.

The application has attribution so users know the identity of the writer or author if they want to find other posts by that writer. The writer can add website information too. The posts can be in both audio and visual formats.

The application had been out a week at the time of the meeting, and it already had 289 users and 850 hot spots in Chicago. So far, the hot spots are mostly in Chicago but there are others all over the world.

The company makes money by licensing the technology to other vendors; however, they would like to keep it freely available to writers and end-users. If you’re interested in trying it out, you can find the Appoet publisher at the website [Infused.today](http://Infused.today). Yes, you read that correctly, it is [.today](http://.today) not [.com](http://.com).

All in all, it was a very interesting presentation. ■

— Cynthia Tomusiak

# Did you know...



**B**reak out the single malt and throw on your kilt. In honor of the recent failed vote for independence, here are a few writer-centric facts you might not know about Scotland.

**Haggis**, largely considered the national dish of Scotland, is a mix of sheep innards, oatmeal, and spices, all encased in a sheep intestine. In 1787, Scottish poet Robert Burns wrote *Address to a Haggis*, proclaiming his love for the “chieftain o’ the pudding race.” After Burns died, his friends began meeting every year on his birthday for haggis and scotch. “Burns’ Suppers” continue to this day. Me, I prefer pizza and beer.

**The legend of the Loch Ness monster** dates back to at least 500 AD but was aided by the completion of a road around the lake in 1933, which allowed drivers a clear view. That year, a couple claimed they saw Nessie cross the road. Several newspapers sent reporters to cover the story. London’s *Daily Mail* hired a famous big-game hunter who discovered huge footprints, prompting the sensational headline “Monster of Loch Ness Not a Legend But a Fact.” Experts later determined the footprints were a hoax. No word on whether the *Daily Mail* printed a correction.

**The story of Sawney Bean** is one of the most gruesome Scottish legends, and

wouldn’t be out of place in a modern horror movie. It’s unknown whether Alexander ‘Sawney’ Bean was actually a real person or just a creation of Scottish folklore, but the story is intriguing though pretty nasty.

According to legend, Sawney Bean was the head of a criminal, cannibalistic family in the 15th century, during the reign of King James I of Scotland. It is claimed that he, his wife, and 46 children and grandchildren killed and ate over a thousand people before they were captured and executed. So much for a balanced diet!

**Sir Arthur Conan Doyle** actually trained and practiced as a doctor but always wanted to be a writer. After his father died, he penned short stories to help his family pay the bills, creating the character of Sherlock Holmes in these early works. He also wrote more serious historical novels but was never a great success with them and was annoyed that he was most well-known for his mysteries. Doyle increased his fees hoping editors would give up asking for Holmes stories, but he was surprised when they paid him his ridiculous asking prices. Let’s all try that! ■

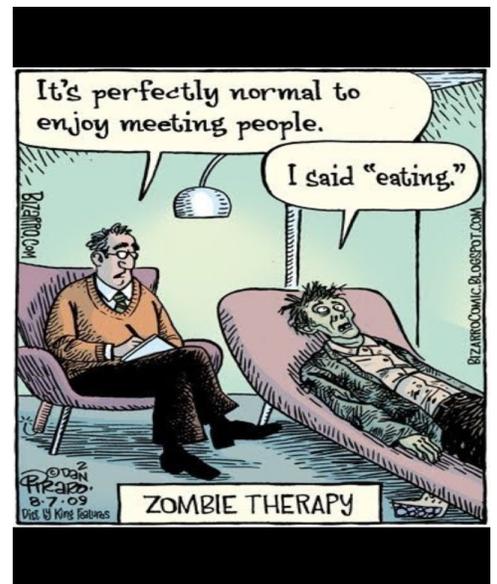
— Katherine Mikkelsen

## Testimonial

“I have had terrific experiences since joining IWOC. I’ve met talented people from whom I learned a great deal; have been lucky enough to receive good referrals; made connections that I treasure; had the ability to engage in great discussions about work ethics, politics and much more; and found that IWOC was helpful in finding work as a freelancer.” ■

Esther L. Manewith

**IWOC Welcomes  
Returning Member  
Noreen Kelly**



# There's an App for THAT?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4.

your iPhone with its free easy-to-use [iHandy Level](#) app. If you want more features, iHandySoft has created a [Carpenters toolkit](#) that has more functionality.

Your editor grew up in Youngstown, Ohio, a city then noted for its Mafia connections. There, a favored way of getting rid of rivals was to wire a bomb to the hapless victim's car ignition so that when the car was started, it blew up. So the prevailing joke was that for \$15 a barber would cut your hair and for \$50 he'd start your car. You probably don't have those worries, but here's an app that will do that and more. In addition to starting the car, the [ViperSmartStart](#) application lets you

unlock it, pop the trunk, and sound the alarm — if you have one — so you can find the darn thing if you've forgotten where you parked. Think how nice it would be to let the vehicle warm up a bit before you got in on a frigid day. However, don't leave your car keys at home. You'd be locked out if you found yourself without cell phone coverage.

[FlipTime](#) is a neat little iPhone app that can replace your desk calendar. It's designed to sit in your iPhone's dock while you are at your desk. It saves paper, and it's cute. There are also a number of calendar apps available for Android phones at the Google Play store.



Let's say you want to show your client something on your home computer during a meeting in her office. Can you do it? You bet. With the [TeamViewer](#) for Android, iPhone, or Windows Phone, you can access remote computers on the go.

[Billings](#) offers professional time tracking and invoicing for the iPhone, iPad, and Mac. It's free, but if you want to synchronize your devices, there is an app you need to buy. Why not try it on one before you buy?



Most of these apps are for the iPhone, but usually it's the other way around, so fair is fair. There are likely similar apps for Android and Windows phones. If you'd like some of the apps you see here, check to see if they're available for your phone OS. Let me know, and I'll write them up for *Stet* next month.

— Joen Kinnan

## “The secret of getting ahead is getting started.”

— Mark Twain

## In the next issue. . .



- **November 11: IWOC Monthly Meeting:** Join us as IWOC webmaster Roger Rueff shows us how to advertise our products or services via Facebook and Google Adwords.
- **President's column:** A nice debut column this month, so look for another goodie in November.
- **Helpful tips on software, hardware, and/or just plain biz practices, and much more.**

