

## When finding educated workers will be a tough job

### SMA panel will discuss looming worker shortage

Why does the United States run the risk of a major tech-related infrastructure meltdown? When will the shortage of needed technology workers become critical? What can be done now to address the growing threat to the economy?

Join a panel of three experts: **Edward E. Gordon**, author of *The 2010 Meltdown: Solving the Impending Jobs Crisis*, **Martin von Walterskirchen**, Swiss Business Hub Minister & Director, and **Peggy Luce**, vice president, Chicago-land Chamber of Commerce, for a presentation and discussion of major high-tech labor-economic issues.

The panel will explore viable options for finding and training the next generation of advanced manufacturing workers. It is now vitally important to increase the number of younger tech-savvy workers in

Chicago and across the United States.

Edward E. Gordon, an internationally recognized writer, researcher, speaker and consultant on the future of America's and the world's work force, is president of Imperial Consulting in Chicago and Palm Desert, Calif., where he has had clients ranging from Fortune 500 companies to government agencies, work force boards, and other groups. The many books Ed include *Skills Wars*, *FutureWork* and *Closing the Literacy Gap*. His research on current business issues has appeared in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Los Angeles Times, Washington Post, Chicago Tribune and elsewhere. He taught for 20 years at three Chicago universities: DePaul, Loyola and Northwestern.

Peggy Luce is responsible for developing and implementing programs and services that provide value to member businesses, with special focus on education and work force quality and workplace initiatives.

Martin von Walterskirchen is director



**Edward E. Gordon**

of the seven Trade Commissions of Switzerland to the USA (Swiss Business Hub USA), a graduate (honors) of the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland, a previous Councilor of the Swiss Embassy in Moscow, Swiss Chief Negotiator for Services during the Uruguay Round of the GATT, General Secretary of the Swiss Federal Office for foreign economic affairs, and Personal Adviser to the Swiss Minister of Justice and Police and to the Swiss President.

#### October 9, 2007 program

**Cliff Dwellers**  
**200 S. Michigan Avenue**  
**22nd floor**

**6 p.m. - Social Hour**  
**7:00 p.m. - Program**

**Free - members, teachers, students**  
**\$5.00 - general public**

### Member news

**Kevin Stein** and **David Hernandez** will be at the Mighty Mini Show Oct 20, at the BlueLine Studio, 2818 W Bloomingtondale, Chicago. ... The paperback version of *Lady Ilena: Way of the Warrior* by **Patricia Malone** was released on Aug. 14. ... The forthcoming anthology *Chicago Blues* (Bleak House Books), due out next month, will include a story from **David J. Walker**, "A Weekend in the Country" and one by **Michael Allen Dymmo**. The collection was edited by

**Libby Fischer Hellmann**, who also contributed a story. ... **Deborah Woodworth's** story "The Moose Whisperer," is in an anthology of Minnesota mysteries coming out this month, *Resort to Murder* (Nodin Press). ... A new **Gerard Wozek** poem, "My Soldier Dolls" is in the premiere issue of a lit magazine called "Knockout #1," forthcoming in October. ... The Anti-Defamation League honored **Scott Turow** with its First Amendment Freedom Award on Sept. 11. .... A

review of *Selected Letters, Aldous Huxley*, published by **Ivan R. Dee**, appeared in the September issue of the Atlantic Monthly. ... **John Christgau** was interviewed in June by USA Today. ... **Lynn Voedisch** will sign copies of her novel *Excited Light* at the Midwest Literary Festival Oct. 6 and 7 in Aurora. ... **Margaret McMullan's** *When I Crossed No-Bob* is due out in November. ... **Mary Elizabeth Anderson** has an Oct. 6 book signing scheduled at Lee's Booksellers in Lin-

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## Literary License

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### Awards

**Irving Cutler's** book *Chicago: Metropolis of the Mid-Continent, Fourth Edition* (Southern Illinois University Press), received an award for excellence from the Illinois State Historical Society at its annual awards luncheon held on April 28 at the Pere Marquette State Park Lodge in Grafton, Ill.

The book portrays the growth and development of Chicago from the mud-hole of the prairie to today's world-class city.

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### On the radio

**Ron Offen** was interviewed on WBEZ during Steve Edward's morning program, "848." (The interview was then rebroadcast on "Act Two" and "Hello Beautiful.") The original broadcast was on May 10, in which Offen was interviewed by PBS correspondent, Judith Valente, and in which he read some of his poetry.

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### Correction

The address of the Society of Midland Authors president, **Jim Merriner**, is listed incorrectly in the most recent edition of the SMA yearbook. The correct address is 823 Home Avenue, Oak Park, IL, 60304-1015. Also, Jim has changed his e-mail address. His new e-mail address is: jlmerriner@sbcglobal.net

# Does 'PR' for your book stand for Paltry Response or Pretty Radical?

**By Thomas Ciesielka**

Genuine publicity stunts or announcements that grab the media's attention can be very beneficial for everyone involved. The media want something that is going to interest their audiences.

An artist painting a family portrait is not dramatic. However a child standing alone in front of a pile of ruins that was once the child's home is going to get someone's attention.

Here are illustrations of how a seemingly ordinary announcement can be enhanced to attract media interest. (All these really took place):

#### **Example 1: Promoting remodeling of a downtown office building**

*Straight announcement:* Send out a press release saying that the building is being remodeled and provide the standard details of cost, restoration plans and name of contractors.

*"Enhanced" announcement:* Have all the construction workers hang outside the building wearing tuxedos. Alert the television stations and photo editors at the newspapers and tell them the building is getting a "first class" remodeling job.

#### **Example 2: Church denied use of a building it owns for certain religious services because of technicality of zoning laws.**

*Straight announcement:* Press release goes into details about how the zoning laws are oppressing the church.



Thomas Ciesielka

*"Enhanced" announcement:* Because the members of the church cannot use the building, have an outside protest service, followed by a prayer circle with all the members of the church praying for the leaders who are oppressing them. (This one drew the attention of almost every major media outlet in Chicago).

#### **Example 3: A new book is released about networking with people for business and personal success (one of dozens in the marketplace).**

*Straight announcement:* Press release describes book and gives examples of

*Genuine events or announcements that "grab" the media's attention can be very beneficial for everyone involved.*

some of the best tips listed, as well as the author's credentials and expertise with interpersonal communications.

*"Enhanced" announcement:* List ways to meet people in odd places, including while stuck in an elevator, in a dentist's chair and while waiting outside the ladies' room. (This one got the attention of media across the United States and even the BBC in London!)

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### November 13 program

David Mendell, author of *Obama: From Promise to Power*, will be the speaker at the SMA's November program. Mendell has covered Obama since the beginning of his campaign for the Senate and enjoys far-reaching access to the new senator—both his professional and personal life. He uses this to paint a very inti-

mate portrait of Obama and his life pre- and post-Senate. Mendell, a native of Cincinnati, began writing about urban issues and politics for the Chicago Tribune in 1998. During his eight years at the Trib, Mendell has also covered such breaking national news as the Columbine High School shootings and the Seattle riots spurred by meetings of the World Trade Organization. He lives in Oak Park, Ill.

## New books

### *Framing the issues*

**James Finn Garner** has published his first book in 10 years: *Recut Madness: Favorite Movies Retold for Your Partisan Pleasure* (Avalon). In the book, Garner shows how rabid right- and left-wingers can rewrite famous movies to protect themselves from ideas they don't like. The biggest section is a conservative fantasy called "The Wizard of Dubya."

Garner also has launched a new Web site called BARDBALL.COM, which is dedicated to "reviving the art of baseball doggerel." Readers around the country have contributed poems about favorite teams and players. A nine-year-old sent a poem about his first Little League home run, and an 80-year-old fan from Detroit has sent limericks about the unbelievable size of Barry Bonds' head. SMA members are welcome to check out the site.

### *A long Memory Lane*

**Studs Terkel's** new book, *Touch and Go: A Memoir*, got a good review in the Aug. 27 edition of Publishers Weekly.

Terkel's memoir "is a medley of all the extraordinary characters he's encountered through his career, from the adult loners of his youth in Chicago's Wells-Grand Hotel, to New Deal politicians," the magazine said. PW added: "Americans might get to know their collective past a lot better if all history lessons were as absorbing as this one."

### *Porcine fun*

**Barbara Gregorich** has a new book out—*Waltur Buys a Pig in a Poke*—an entertaining early-reader chapter book (Houghton Mifflin, \$15). The book has stories that play with idioms and words in a cozy domestic setting.

### *Ambitious success*

Publishers Weekly in its July 23 issue called **Christian Wiman's** new book, *Ambition and Survival: Becoming a Poet* (Copper Canyon), a "weighty first prose collection [that] should inspire wide attention, partly because of Wiman's current job, partly because of his astute insights."

### *A lot to talk about*

The University Press of Mississippi has a forthcoming book titled *Conversations*

with **Leon Forrest**, edited by Dana A. Williams. **Leon Forrest** (1937-1997) was a former SMA president and is described in the press' catalog as "among the most innovative and ambitious African American fiction writers of the twentieth century. . . . Largely set in his native Chicago, Forrest's novels comprise an oeuvre of powerful urban modernism." *Conversations with Leon Forrest* collects interviews ranging from 1975 to 1997.

### *New anthology*

Former SMA President **Joanne Koch** has co-edited with Sarah Blacher Cohen an anthology, *Shared Stages: Ten American Dramas of Blacks and Jews* to be published in October by State University of New York Press that includes "Driving Miss Daisy," "Fires in the Mirror," "I'm Not Rappaport," and the play Koch and Blacher co-authored and that has toured 30 universities around the country, "Soul Sisters."

### *Pro Magnon?*

The fossil record is unclear. Did Neanderthal speak? Did he laugh, have music, feel love? Did he interact with or get killed by homo sapiens in mortal combat, or get pushed to extinction on marginal lands? **Steven Burgauer's** new book, *The Night of the Eleventh Sun*, answers some of those questions in a strongly researched fictional setting.

### *Seventh sealed*

**Bernard Brommel** has published his seventh volume with co-author, Kathleen Galvin of Northwestern University. Brommel writes that it's "a happy time and I do not plan any more at 77. We took on a third author, Carma Byland. . . . Our book is called *Family Communication*. The book has had a great run and has been used in some 300 different colleges over the years in various years and editions."

### *Building an audience*

Children's books coming out this fall include **Andrea Beaty's** new book, *Iggy Peck, Architect* (Abrams, \$15.95). A boy builds architectural masterpieces out of almost anything — even diapers.

### *'Notable new book'*

**Rick Kaempfer's** new novel, *Sever-*

*ance* (ENC Press), came out in May. It's about a multi-media company that aims to force its longtime morning radio personality to leave so the company can avoid paying severance. Robert Feder of the Sun-Times called *Severance*: "A notable new book . . . told with the keen insight of a veteran insider, it's a humorous indictment of an industry that has lost all sense of purpose, except for making money, of course." In 2004 Kaempfer and John Swanson wrote *The Radio Producer's Handbook*.

### *Chicago history*

In June, **Sally A. Kitt Chappell** published *Chicago's Urban Nature: A Guide to the City's Architecture & Landscape*. Chappell is professor emerita of art history at DePaul University. *Chicago's Urban Nature* is filled with maps, recommended tours, and nearly 100 color images.

### *Bucking discouraging trends*

Supported by a grant from Northwestern University, Evanston author/educator **Paul McComas** and 16 current and past members of his Advanced Fiction Writing workshop have published *Further Persons Imperfect*, a collection of 17 original short stories written in the first-person. The book is a follow-up to the workshop's first book, *First Person Imperfect* (2003, iUniverse).

McComas is author of the critically acclaimed novel *Unplugged* (2002, John Daniel & Co.) and short-story collection *Twenty Questions* (1998, Daniel & Daniel).

"These authors," McComas writes in his introduction, "have bucked two dispiriting trends: tell-all memoir, and self-indulgent deconstructionist bilge. Rather, in the tradition of the very best literature, they have put their characters first."

### *Recipe for reading*

**Ellen F. Steinberg**, using the pocket notebook and handwritten recipes of Irma Rosenthal, a young Chicago housewife from the turn of the 20th century, has written *Learning to Cook in 1898: A Chicago Culinary Memoir* (Wayne State University Press, July). It provides a glimpse into American culinary history.

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## Final Chapters

Dorsey Connors Forbes, a longtime member of the Society of Midland Authors and a pioneer journalist who for decades wrote household advice columns for the Chicago Sun-Times, died earlier this month after breaking a hip in a fall.

Her books included *Gadgets Galore!* (1953), *Save Time, Save Money, Save Yourself* (1972), and *Helpful Hints for Hurried Homemakers: Time and Money-Saving Shortcuts* (1988).

Relatives said Connors was in her 90s, the Sun-Times said in an obituary.

A University of Illinois graduate, Connors broke into TV news in 1948, hosting "Personality Profiles" on WGN-TV. In the 1950s, she reported on fashion from Paris for NBC's "Today"



**Dorsey Connors Forbes**

show, the Sun-Times said.

She began her advice column in the 1960s. The column was nationally syndicated.

The feisty but sophisticated Chicagoan attended Marywood School for Girls in Chicago and graduated with honors from the University of Illinois in the 1930s. A socialite, she built a professional career many journalists would envy, the Sun-Times said.

Until 1964, she was involved with television programs on WMAQ and WGN. She was a floor reporter for both Republican and Democratic national conventions for WGN in 1960.

Her father was a state senator and ward committeeman, William J. Connors. Connors Park in the Gold Coast is named in his honor.

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## Member news

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coln, Neb. ... SMA board member **Arnie Bernstein** is working on *Terror in Michigan: The Bath School Bombing of 1927*, scheduled to be published in 2008 by the University of Michigan Press. ... On Oct. 26-28, **Michael Allen Dymmoch** will be at Magna cum Murder in Muncie, Ind. ... Booklist Assistant Editor **Donna Seaman**'s "Open Books" program, an hour-long, Chicago-based radio program on which she speaks with writers whose work she finds enlightening and affecting, now has a Web site, thanks to a grant from the Leo S. Guthman Fund. The site offers interviews with such authors as Michael Chabon and Alison Swan, as well as some ALA staffers who have written books. ... **Betsy J. Green** is working on her latest book *Watch Out for Scams!* ... **Rebecca Johns**, author of *Icebergs*, was scheduled to be at a Sept. 16 writing workshop at the Algonquin Area Public Library in Algonquin, Ill. ... *Telling Time With Puppies And Kittens* by **Patricia J. Murphy** came out in spring. ... On July 29, Chicago Sun-Times columnist Carol Marin said **Kevin Davis** "has written powerfully of [public defenders'] work in

his recently released book *Defending the Damned: Inside Chicago's Cook County Public Defender's Office*. "If there was good reason to read this book before, there are even better reasons now," Marin wrote. ... In June, **Gerry and Janet Souter** were shipped the first copies of their latest artist biographies: Janet's bio (in French) of sculptor Camille Claudel (Rodin's protege) arrived, as did Gerry Souter's coffee-table volume, *Edward Hopper — Light and Dark*. Gerry's bio of Frida Kahlo is being re-released in a boxed set with his new life of Diego Rivera. The authors also just finished their slipcased book, *The Vietnam War Experience*, which will be released this fall by Barnes & Noble Publishing. ... **Joe Meno** was scheduled to sign *Tender as Hellfire* Sept. 14 at Quimbey's in Chicago. ... **Jerry Crimmins** signed *Fort Dearborn: a Novel* Aug. 24 at the Chicago History Museum. ... **David Radvich's America Bound: An Epic for Our Time** came out earlier this year from Plain View Press. ... An excerpt from *Victims of Justice* by **Thomas Frisbie** and **Randy Garrett** will be included in a book published by Northwestern University Press.

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## New members

**Ingrid Wendt**, who was born and reared in Aurora, is author of *Surgeonfish* (poems, 2004), *Angles of the Sharpest Ascending* (Word Press, 2004) and *Blow the Candle Out* (Pecan Grove Press, 2002).

In all, Wendt is the author of five books of poems, two anthologies, a book-length teaching guide, numerous articles and reviews and more than 200 individual poems in such magazines and anthologies as Poetry, Poetry Northwest, Antioch Review, Northwest Review, Ms. and No More Masks! An Anthology of 20th Century American Women Poets.

She has taught literature and poetry writing for more than 30 years at all educational levels, including the MFA program of Antioch University Los Angeles, at teacher-training institutes throughout the United States and in Germany and in hundreds of public school classrooms, grades K-12, in Oregon, Washington, Utah, Illinois, Iowa and overseas.

Among her many honors are the Oregon Book Award, the 2004 Editions Prize from WordTech Editions, the 2003 Yellowglenn Award from Word Press, the Carolyn Kizer Award, several Pushcart nominations and the D.H. Lawrence Award.

She is an avid scuba diver, a gardener, a hiker, the parent of a grown daughter and a wife (of 37 years) to poet and writer Ralph Salisbury and a student of languages.

**Julie Hochstrasser**, associate professor of art history at the University of Iowa's School of Art and Art History, is author of *Still Life and Trade in the Dutch Golden Age* (Yale University Press, 2007).

Hochstrasser has held fellowships from Fulbright, Robert H. and Clarice Smith at the Center for Advanced Studies in the Visual Arts in Washington D.C., Mabelle McLeod Lewis, the UI Obermann Center, and the American Council of Learned Societies. At the University of Iowa she has received the Dean's Scholar and Faculty Scholar Awards, Iowa Promise Momentum Plus and the Arts and Humanities Initiative. She serves on the executive boards of the Historians of Netherlandish Art and the American Association of Netherlandic Studies. Her current project, *The Dutch in the World*, has taken her to key sites of Dutch trade throughout Asia and Africa.