



FREELANCE FORUM

PO Box 250024
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www.freelanceforum.org

Annual Membership Dues:

Individual - \$85

Couples/Partners - \$150

Student - \$60

2006 EXECUTIVE BOARD

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FREELANCE *folio*

E-NEWS FOR
MEMBERS & FRIENDS of
THE FREELANCE FORUM
FEBRUARY 2006

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2ND MEETING*

Networking Aerobics: The Freelancer's Fitness Program for Building Profit

BY POLLY WADE

Take it from networking guru **Wendy Kinney** of PowerCore: "Lurking isn't networking." Wendy preaches that in the world of networking, just like the online world, it's easy to lurk at the edge, learning and observing but not really participating. Business networking is "high touch," and it requires full engagement.

Join us in February as Wendy gives us practical advice on making your networking efforts count, including:

- How to start—and end—a conversation at a networking event.
- What to talk about before talking about business.
- How to build a profitable follow-through system.

WHEN: February 2, 6:15–8:30 pm

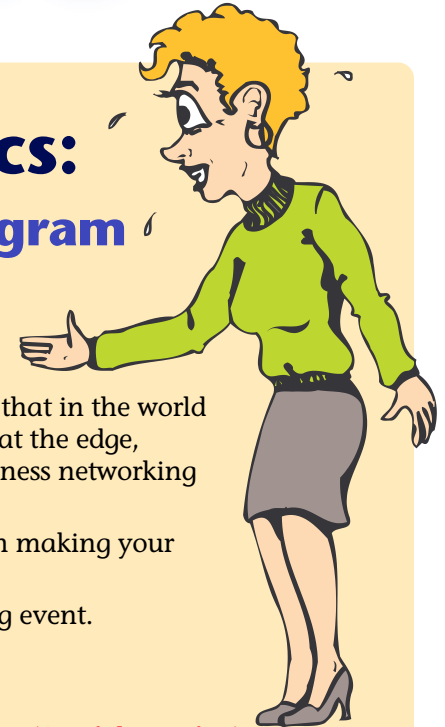
***WHERE:** (Special Location)

The Art Institute of Atlanta

ADDRESS: 6600 Peachtree Dunwoody Road #100 (see last page for directions)

ADMISSION: FREE for Members/Guests \$15

PLEASE NOTE: Parking WILL BE ALLOWED in the "permit only" parking deck at the Art Institute.



"Bring A Friend" Guest Promotion

If there's someone you'd like to introduce to the Freelance Forum, February could be the perfect opportunity. We're encouraging everyone to "Bring A Friend"—a special guest you think might benefit from learning more about our group.

Our program will focus on networking and encouraging ways to meet new folks. To add a little spice to the evening, we're planning some extra door prize drawings for both members and guests.

Here's what's in store in addition to our usual door prizes (two of the ever-popular \$25 gift cards, open to everyone on hand):

Each **member** who brings a guest can enter the bonus drawing to win a \$50 gift card.

We'll draw for another \$25 gift card—only **guests** are eligible.

And one lucky **guest** will receive one year of free membership in the Freelance Forum, along with a one-year online portfolio—a combined \$135 value!

So if you've been meaning to bring a guest along one night—especially someone who's a great candidate for membership—February 2nd is the right time to "bring a friend." With the extra drawings that night, you and/or your friend might be one of our lucky winners!

Practice Your Networking Skills!

The Membership committee is looking for volunteers who want to get involved, meet more people and welcome our newcomers. Ambassadors, mentors, introverts and extroverts are encouraged to join in. Please contact chair **Ray Pelosi** at 404-373-1956 or raypelosi@yahoo.com.

GO TO THE SOURCE

Just click on
Find a Freelancer
at freelanceforum.org
to instantly connect
with Atlanta's best
creative talent.

www.freelanceforum.org

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Linda Neiheisel, writer/PR

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PRESIDENT'S
CORNER

Over the past few months, you may have noticed that our meetings aren't quite as crowded. The food seems to last a little longer. We rarely run out of seats. In other words, if you've thought that maybe our membership has been down a little lately, you're right.

After a couple of years of strong growth, we had a net loss of 24 members in 2005. We were pleased to welcome 32 new members, yet we also saw 56 old friends decide not to rejoin us. While the reasons are as varied as our eclectic personalities, a major trend was simply the improving economy. When times are hard, more people are out of work and many turn to freelancing. And when things pick up and people get jobs, they're no longer freelancers.

Yet, if you're like me and many of our veteran members, you also have to think there must be more people out there who would benefit from the Freelance Forum. Out of some four million people in the metropolitan Atlanta area, there have to be more than 130-odd people (or should that be approximately 130 people?) who could be participating in our group. Whether it's the monthly meetings or the committee

involvement or our various networking sessions, there's plenty of room for more creative professionals under our tent.

Which brings us to the February meeting. What better way to find guests than through our present members? And what better way to encourage you to bring a guest than with some simple, old-fashioned bribery? So, check out the details on our "Bring A Friend" promotion, where both you and your guest can enter some special drawings on February 2nd. And even if you can't bring someone this month, please help us spread the word among the creative community so we can offer the benefits and camaraderie of our group to a wider audience.

Along those same lines, we'll also hear some great tips on networking and growing your business from Wendy Kinney. Wendy's a dynamic speaker and her program is sure to help us all expand our skills and get to know each other better.

Here's looking forward to seeing you—and a guest—on the 2nd at the Art Institute of Atlanta.

—Bobby Hickman



Jorge Valentin-Stone from the Small Business Administration addresses the Freelance Forum on priorities for small and freelance businesses. Photo by John Slempp.

January Meeting Recap

BY CHRISTIN WHITTINGTON

The first fact speaker Jorge Valentin-Stone laid on the capacity crowd at January's Freelance Forum meeting was chilling: "90 percent of business start-ups fail within five years."

January is a time for resolutions, and the two Small Business Administration

representatives who spoke, Veterans Affairs Officer Mr. Valentin-Stone and Business Development Specialist Dorothy Fletcher, emphasized that it's also the time to make your business plan your top priority. Entrepreneurs who don't take the time to create a business plan, revamp it as needed and actually follow it—not just file it away in a drawer—essentially have no control over how they do business.

What? You don't have a business plan? In fact, most of the audience raised their hands on that question. Not to worry. The Small Business Administration has a number of programs and resources, many of them free or for a nominal fee, to help small companies get off the ground and plan for growth. Information and links are available on the SBA website, www.sba.gov/ga.

Ms. Fletcher discussed the many training programs sponsored by the SBA, SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) and the Women's Business Centers. Mr. Valentin-Stone explained how the SBA guarantees low-interest small business loans through a number of banks, with a loan period of up to 25 years.

They also offered a tip on keeping your business healthy: check your credit record every six months, and request your credit scores. Fully 75 percent of credit-worthy individuals in the US have poor credit, Mr. Valentin-Stone said.

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2
6:15 - 8:30 PM

AT
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ATLANTA
SEE PAGE 5 FOR MAP
AND DIRECTIONS

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Incoming members of this year's Freelance Forum board hit the ground running. Storm damage in late December made our usual meeting place, the Creative Circus, temporarily uninhabitable, and board members had to scramble to find new digs—as it turns out, not just for January but for February as well. They've also been putting their heads together to promote networking, membership and other mandates. Who are these hard-working people?

Bobby L. Hickman, President, is a former newspaper reporter and editor whose freelance journalism has appeared in many Southern newspapers, the *Associated Press*—even the *National Enquirer*. He writes for the *Atlanta Business Chronicle*; magazines such as *Points North*, *North Fulton Living* and *Cherokee Living*; and *MergerMarket*, a global business publication. As a copywriter, Bobby works with organizations of all sizes to create newsletters, press releases, brochures, Website copy and marketing materials. His company, B.L. Hickman and Associates Inc., was formed in 1995.

Jerry Silvestrini, Vice President, was born in a log cabin on the Sandusky River. He graduated from a small art school in a nondescript city. He worked for a couple of years in studios but he didn't like it. Jerry has been freelancing for sometime now and he likes to draw pictures. Especially flies. His client list includes all of the big names. Jerry's company, Dog Eat Dog Productions, specializes in cartoons, character development, children's books and product illustration.

Jan Stittleburg, Secretary, comes to Atlanta from Wisconsin by way of Massachusetts. She studied mechanical design in school, worked on the drafting board for a few years, then decided she needed to be able to color outside the lines. She has been doing product and architectural photography for the last 20 years. She worked in prepress, learning how to create printable files, and now does a wee



The 2006 Freelance Forum Board: David Knope, Bobby Hickman, Jan Stittleburg, Laura Heck, Jerry Silvestrini. Not pictured: Charissa Schultz. Photo by Jan Stittleburg.

bit of graphic design, mostly for her catalog clients.

David Knope, Treasurer, turned over his duties as co-editor of this newsletter to take on new duties as Treasurer. His background includes 19 years in corporate communication at Georgia Power where he wrote speeches,

video scripts, marketing materials and human resource communications. In 2000, David formed his own company, Knope Communications, Inc., doing freelance work mainly for corporate clients in Atlanta and the Southeast. He holds degrees in journalism from the University of Wisconsin and in film from The London Film School. He has been a Freelance Forum member for about six years.

Charissa Schultz, Member-at-Large, is a native Atlantan and has been a member of the Freelance Forum since 1996. She is proud to have the Freelance Forum logo as part of her portfolio. In fact, logo design is one of her specialties, along with multi-page brochures and conceptual direct mail pieces. She likes to tell people that "brochure" is her middle name. Charissa gained her design expertise working full-time with advertising agencies and design firms before launching her freelance career more than 10 years ago. She currently enjoys working with other designers as well as directly with several corporate clients.

Laura Heck, Past President, has been freelancing for almost 20 years, first as a sound engineer in New York City, then as a production artist for Merrill Lynch before moving to Atlanta in 1993. Laura and her husband, Jamie, began Heck Design Group, specializing in production art, expert mechanicals and photo-retouching for ad agencies, corporate and government clients. She has a parallel pursuit in fine art photography with her *Reflections in Water* series. Laura has been a Freelance Forum member since 2001. She is also on the Duluth Merchants Association board of directors.

Got an item or suggestion for the *Folio*? Have you won an award, landed a new account, had a baby? Contact one of our *Folio* editors:

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We want to hear from you.

2006 Sourcebook News

COVER DESIGN CONTEST DEADLINE

February 28

DIRECTORY PAGE LAYOUT CONTEST DEADLINE

February 28

It's time to get our 2006 Sourcebook underway! We are asking members to submit designs for both the cover and the inside directory page listings—you can submit designs for either or both. If your design is chosen, you will be credited in both the Sourcebook and this newsletter. Last year's cover design by **Sandy Barth** incorporated thumbnails of members' work as part of her design, and it really accented the spirit of our group.

Your directory listing will come from your online profile. Please make sure your profile is updated by March 15. We will be offering ad space again this year, so please begin planning your ads.

Laura Heck is chairing the project; contact her at 770-814-8984 or **Heck DesignGroup@bellsouth.net** to get involved or for more information.



Paul Glickstein displays the Freelance Forum 2006 Sourcebook during the January meeting at the Art Institute of Atlanta. Photo by John Slemp.

How Does Laura Heck Do That?

An enthusiastic crowd got answers to the question "How does Laura Heck do that?" posed by the AJC ("Expressions over Coffee," 1/12/06). The well-attended Meet the Artist Reception at the Northern Star Coffeehouse on January 14th generated a lot of interest in Laura's *Reflections in Water* exhibit. The coffeehouse's weathered brick provided an excellent backdrop for her collection, complemented by the relaxed atmosphere established by owner Bill Luebben.

Laura described the process of using light and wind to create her unique photography. "It's like a treasure hunt," she said, discussing the challenge of finding suitable locations to capture her impressionistic photographs. "I enjoy calling attention to the natural beauty that surrounds us everyday." Her reflections are shot in or



Laura Heck and Linda McCulloch share a closeup during Laura's Meet the Artist reception for her *Reflections in Water* exhibit. Photo by PR-PICS.com (Tim Shannon).

near Gwinnett County, with no computer manipulation. Freelance Forum member Lois Graham commented, "Your sensitivity to the light is wonderful and the vivid colors lend an incredible richness to the pieces. I also liked seeing the range from realism to pure abstraction."

Laura's *Reflections in Water* show is being held over, and will continue through the end of February.

Coincidence? I Don't Think So.

BY LAURA HECK AND LINDA MCCULLOCH

It seems serendipitous considering our upcoming February networking program. Freelance Forum past presidents **Linda McCulloch** and **Laura Heck** were both quoted extensively in the December 2005 issue of *Atlanta Woman* magazine in an article entitled "The Power of Networking." The author, Mickey Goodman, had attended a few of our meetings and was impressed with how well we run our programs and promote networking.

We're all creative people. Freelance Forum has helped us become better business people.

—LINDA MCCULLOCH

This is a really sharp group and the Q&A session is always valuable by itself. People ask questions relevant to all of us.

—LAURA HECK

I hire writers, marketing professionals and others in the Forum. I feel confident they will be as dedicated to the end result as I am.

—LINDA MCCULLOCH

Mickey Goodman closed her article with the following comment: "By volunteering . . . for a committee at AWN [Atlanta Women's Network] or the Freelance Forum . . . networkers can grow professionally while forging new relationships. Frequently, those relationships open up doors for business opportunities."

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DIRECTIONS TO THE ART INSTITUTE OF ATLANTA

FROM I-20 EAST— Traveling east on I-20, take the I-285 bypass north, exit number 51B, towards Chattanooga/Greenville. Next, take the GA-400 north exit, exit number 27, towards Atlanta/Dahlonega. Off of GA 400, take exit 5A and bear right onto Abernathy Road. Turn left at the second light, Peachtree Dunwoody Road. Continue on Peachtree Dunwoody Road through the first light. Take the next left into the Embassy Row complex. The Art Institute of Atlanta is the first building on the left.

FROM I-20 WEST— Traveling west on I-20, take the I-285 bypass north, exit number 67B, towards Greenville/Chattanooga. Next, take the GA-400 north exit, exit number 27, towards Atlanta/Dahlonega. Off of GA 400, take exit 5A and bear right onto Abernathy Road. Turn left at the second light, Peachtree Dunwoody Road. Continue on Peachtree Dunwoody Road through the first light. Take the next left into the Embassy Row complex. The Art Institute of Atlanta is the first building on the left.

FROM GA 400 NORTH— Traveling north on GA 400, take exit 5A and bear right onto Abernathy Road. Turn left at the second light, Peachtree Dunwoody Road. Continue on Peachtree Dunwoody Road through the first light. Take the next left into the Embassy Row complex. The Art Institute of Atlanta is the first building on the left.

FROM GA 400 SOUTH— Traveling south on GA 400, take exit 5 and turn left onto Abernathy Road. Turn left at the second light, Peachtree Dunwoody

Road. Continue on Peachtree Dunwoody Road through the first light. Take the next left into the Embassy Row complex. The Art Institute of Atlanta is the first building on the left.

FROM I-85 NORTH— Traveling north on I-85, take the GA-400 bypass north, exit number 87. Off of GA 400, take exit 5A and bear right onto Abernathy Road. Turn left at the second light, Peachtree Dunwoody Road. Continue on Peachtree Dunwoody Road through the first light. Take the next left into the Embassy Row complex. The Art Institute of Atlanta is the first building on the left.

FROM I-85 SOUTH— Traveling south on I-85, take the I-285 bypass west, exit number 95A, towards Chattanooga/Birmingham. Next, take the GA-400 north exit, exit number 27, towards Atlanta/Dahlonega. Off of GA 400, take exit 5A and bear right onto Abernathy Road. Turn left at the second light, Peachtree Dunwoody Road. Continue on Peachtree Dunwoody Road through the first light. Take the next left into the Embassy Row complex. The Art Institute of Atlanta is the first building on the left.

FROM I-75 NORTH— Traveling north on I-75, continue through downtown Atlanta and take the I-85 north exit, exit number 251, on the left towards Greenville. Next, take the GA-400 north exit, exit number 87. Off of GA 400, take exit 5A and bear right onto Abernathy Road. Turn left at the second light, Peachtree Dunwoody Road. Continue on Peachtree Dunwoody Road through the first light. Take the next left into the Embassy Row complex. The Art Institute of Atlanta is the first building on the left.

FROM I-75 SOUTH— Traveling south on I-75, take the I-285 bypass east, exit number 259A, towards Greenville/Augusta. Next, take the GA-400 north exit, exit number 27, towards Atlanta/Dahlonega. Off of GA 400, take exit 5A and bear right onto Abernathy Road. Turn left at the second light, Peachtree Dunwoody Road. Continue on Peachtree Dunwoody Road through the first light. Take the next left into the Embassy Row complex. The Art Institute of Atlanta is the first building on the left.

FROM I-285 EAST OR WEST— Traveling on I-285, take the GA-400 north exit, exit number 27, towards Atlanta/Dahlonega. Off of GA 400, take exit 5A and bear right onto Abernathy Road. Turn left at the second light, Peachtree Dunwoody Road. Continue on Peachtree Dunwoody Road through the first light. Take the next left into the Embassy Row complex. The Art Institute of Atlanta is the first building on the left.

BY MARTA— Take MARTA rail north one stop past the Dunwoody station to Sandy Springs and follow signs to the pedestrian tunnel under Abernathy Road. Turn right out of the tunnel entrance and walk a half block to the corner of Peachtree Dunwoody Road. Turn right and walk two blocks north to the Embassy Row complex, on the left. The Art Institute of Atlanta is the first building on the left.

