

# communicators'



# network

## Calendar

**Thursday, April 10**

*Luncheon Program*

*11:30 a.m. networking*

*12-1:30 p.m. program*

"Technology Translators: A Panel Discussion on Talking Tech for High-Tech Communicators"

*Cost: \$25 members, \$40 non-members. No shows will be billed.*

At Michaels at Shoreline Restaurant, 2960 N. Shoreline Blvd. in Mountain View. From 101, take Shoreline Blvd. toward the amphitheater, enter Shoreline Park and follow the signs to the restaurant.

**Tuesday, April 22**

*Independents' Roundtable*

*6:30 p.m. networking and light*

*dinner; 7-8:30 p.m. program*

"Learn to Market Professional Services Online"

*Cost: \$10 members, \$20 non-members. No shows will be billed.*

At The Lookout restaurant at the Sunnyvale Golf Course.

### IABC Teleseminars

**Tuesday, April 8**

*Building and Maintaining*

*Relationships with Reporters*

Details:

Visit <http://store.yahoo.com/iabcstore/teleseminars.html>

### THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM

## Technology Translators: A Panel Discussion on Talking Tech for High-Tech Communicators

The Silicon Valley is known for its technological innovation. But to be meaningful and useful to broader audiences – including employees, investors, analysts, reporters, and consumers – these innovative ideas often need to be "translated" into terms that are more readily understandable. What is the value of that innovation? How will it help businesses or consumers? How does it work, in easily understandable terms?

Often, communicators who interview the engineers or developers about a company's latest widget find themselves in the position of not just communicator, but translator of the technical jargon into a "real world" business proposition. The Silicon Valley chapter of IABC will present a panel discussion on best practices for communicating and collaborating with the engineers and developers in technology companies. The panel will feature:

### Jonah McLeod, Director of Corporate Communications, Denali Software

Jonah has nearly 30 years experience covering high technology in the Silicon Valley, both as a public relations professional with Regis McKenna and an award-winning editor for technology trade publications, such as Electronics, Electronic Design and Integrated System Design magazine. He has made a career out of turning high-tech innovations into terms readily understood by the general public.

### Kevin Ewert, Independent Web Developer, Ewert Communications

Kevin, a self-taught web designer and application developer, has been active in Web developing since the mid-1990s. His Web development career began as a Webmaster for a computer reseller, and soon moved on to become an independent contractor. He has been an independent developer for more than six years, and prides himself on being able to

help everyday people understand the technology behind the Web.

### Ellen Ferlazzo, Principal, Sprezzatura Systems, Inc.

Ellen has been in the software consulting business since 1991. Her work is focused on bridging the communications gap between R&D, marketing communications and end users. Ellen's background includes user interface design, project management, marketing communications, requirements' specifications, beta test management, product development, technical support, documentation and training.

### Lunch Program

**When:** Thursday, April 10, 11:30 a.m. networking; 12-1:30 p.m. program

**Where:** Michaels at Shoreline Restaurant, 2960 N. Shoreline Blvd. in Mountain View. From 101, take Shoreline Blvd. toward the amphitheater, enter Shoreline Park and follow the signs to the restaurant.

**Price:** \$25 members, \$40 non-members (No shows will be billed.)

**RSVP:** By 10 a.m. Wednesday, April 9. Register online at Acteva, <http://www.acteva.com/go/sviabc> or by calling toll-free 1-877-422-8382 between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. Pacific time (there is an additional \$1 charge for registering by phone). Meal choices are Chicken Florentine and Grilled Vegetable Brochette with Wild Rice.

**Please note:** Attendees are strongly encouraged to pre-register for this event. Walk-ups on the day of the event will pay an additional \$10 on top of the event cost and will not be assured of meal choice or the availability of a meal.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Photo courtesy of Anne Koudsen

*Spring  
Into Action*

Spring has sprung, and now is the time to volunteer. By springing into action with SV-IABC, you'll strengthen your network of professional contacts by increasing your visibility with your SV-IABC colleagues.

There's always a need for exceptional writers for *Communicators' Network Online*, our first-rate SV-IABC newsletter. If writing is your talent, cover the beat for monthly programs or Independents' Roundtable meetings, or write a contributed article. Just let Nancy Duenkel, our vice president of communications, know and she'll send you out an assignment. Writing articles for *CN Online* is a great way to gain exposure and fill your portfolio, not to mention the value you'll gain by networking through volunteering.

Other volunteer opportunities include participating as a judge in awards competitions from other IABC chapters and districts. We generally judge two to three competitions each year. Judging is a great way to learn new ways to communicate from some of the most talented people in the business. Contact Karen McLaughlin, our new vice president of administration, for more information.

And if these volunteer prospects don't strike your fancy but you are still ready to jump into volunteering, there are other one-time and ongoing volunteer opportunities within the chapter. Check with Beth Volz, our vice president of membership, to find out how you can help.

We just held our first networking mixer of 2003 with a turnout of almost 100 communication professionals. Now, more than ever, we all understand the importance of building and strengthening our professional network — and there's no better way to do that than by volunteering.

So spring into action by volunteering. I know you won't regret it!

**Rob Gibbany**  
President, SV-IABC

**SV-IABC Welcomes  
New Vice President of  
Administration**

Karen Rohack McLaughlin, APR is Queen Buckaroo of QB Comm, Inc. She has more than 20 years of bountiful global and domestic Marcom/PR experience in the high-tech and consumer industry. Prior to running her own Marcom/PR consulting firm working with such clients as Sun, NEC, Cisco, Kodak and Xerox, to list a few, she also worked directly at Sun, HP, Novell and Manning, Selvage and Lee. Her experience ranges from Marcom/PR strategy and development, product launches, development of key influencer programs, communications audits and collateral development to tradeshow and event management. She has also taught an Integrated Marcom/PR Workshop at the University of Berkeley. She held the position of Ethics Chair for the SV-PRSA Chapters and has been an active member of SV-IABC. Welcome Karen! We look forward to working with you.

**March Mixer 2003**

*By Jessica Virk*

This year, SV-IABC held their annual Spring Mixer on Thursday, March 13. More than 100 communications professionals connected with IABC, PRSA and other organizations by coming out to Michael's Restaurant in hopes of meeting a few new people and making some new business connections. Throw in a few hors d'oeuvres and a couple of cocktails, and you've got yourself a great party.

"It was great to see such a strong turnout of folks," said Rob Gibbany, SV-IABC President. "There was a tremendous amount of energy and enthusiasm in the room, and I heard from several people who thought it was a great event." Rob also thanked the many people who worked so hard to put together the mixer, including Marnie Santoyo, vice president of programs and professional development, and Anna Alpar, director of programs. Additionally, the SV-IABC would like to thank the sponsors of this event, HighTech Connect (HTC) and ROI Communications, Inc.

During these tough economic times, it is critical for us to continue to build and maintain our networks. Once things turn around, we're all going to need to turn to one another for resources. Although parties are fun, let's not wait another six months (until the next SV-IABC networking mixer in August) before getting together again. We look forward to seeing you again at one of our SV-IABC events in the near future.

*Jessica Virk is the Marketing Communications Manager of Vircorp.*

## Breaking Out of Your Comfort Zone: The Art of the Coffee Meeting

By Sue Ann Grann

Now, more than ever, communications consultants must also become savvy business developers. Chances are you have attended regular industry mixers, conferences and workshops. If you're like many of your colleagues, you've also held so many coffee meetings at Starbucks that you feel you should own stock in the company!

Many use the coffee meeting as a no-pressure way to get to know a prospective client, learn more about a colleague's complementary skills or discuss the possibility of a strategic partnership for a future project. Collaborating with our colleagues in a casual, neutral environment truly adds value. We can create industry-best practices and form a much needed support network of talented, creative professionals. Yet, we must not lose sight of our ultimate networking goal: To find work!

A new version of the job interview. With all the networking we're doing, it's easy to get a bit too relaxed at our casual coffee meetings. Instead, we should treat these meetings like they are dress rehearsals for the next big presentation or coveted job interview.

When you walk away from your coffee meetings, do you feel as though you've made a lasting impression? Are you confident that your colleague or prospective client will call YOU instead of your competition the next time a project becomes available? Here are some tips to help you make the most out of your coffee encounters:

1. **Do your homework:** If your client or colleague has a web site or marketing materials, spend 15 minutes before your meeting reviewing those materials. The information you've learned will give you the natural conversation openers needed to get the meeting

flowing right from the start. Being informed will also show your associate that you thought enough of him or her to prepare ahead of time.

2. **Define your purpose:** Networking can take up a good deal of your time and we all know that time is our most precious commodity these days. Have an agenda prepared even if it's just in your mind. If you only have an hour to spend, tell your client or colleague up front...and be sure to state what you want to get out of the meeting. You can still convey a friendly, conversational tone without losing sight of your purpose.
3. **Prepare your infomercial.** You've done some research on the person with whom you'll be meeting. Now, spend a few minutes imagining what that person hopes to learn from you. Jot down a few thoughts and put a twist on your classic "networking infomercial." If you're used to saying the same things at your networking meetings, it may be time to freshen up your message. Be sure to customize it for the right audience!
4. **Sharpen your tools:** It's customary at most coffee meetings for both parties to share work samples. Some also share a copy of their professional bio. These tools will speak volumes about you. Just make sure they're saying the right things! (See "*Polishing Your Portfolio.*")
5. **Be on time.** It sounds elementary, but there are so many offenders of this simple rule. Being on time shows respect to the other individual and professionalism on your part. If you repeatedly show up late to your coffee meetings, word might get around that you're not dependable. Get there early, and review your notes.

### Give Your Career a Java Jolt

While times may still seem lean, making the most out of your coffee encounters now will put you at the top of mind of prospective clients and colleagues when the doors of opportunity finally do open. And, when you do land that coveted client presentation, you'll be able to ace it with confidence because you will have done your homework. With your dynamic new portfolio in hand, customized infomercial rehearsed and new strategic partners in tow, you'll land that account faster than you can say, "Grande low-fat latte, please!"

*Sue Ann Grann is a Senior Consultant for Spark! Creative Marketing, an agency that provides marketing, internal communication and advertising for Bay Area businesses.*

### Polishing Your Portfolio

The way you feature and present your work can either enhance or detract from the work itself. Here are some tips to enhance it:

- Organize your samples into categories.
- Feature your best work first and weed out any work that you aren't proud of sharing. Be very clear about your role on each piece and mention the positive solutions you contributed to the project.
- Have a few different "spiels" prepared for your various types of clients.
- If you can't get through the whole portfolio in 15 minutes, eliminate samples or cut down on commentary.
- Add copy blocks to guide your colleagues through your portfolio and help you remember your key speaking points.

**THIS MONTH'S INDEPENDENTS' ROUNDTABLE**

## Learn to Market Professional Services Online

Can designers, writers, consultants and other independent professionals really use the Internet to effectively market their services? Do you think an "online brochure" is the best you can do on a web site? At April's Independents' Roundtable, Robert Middleton of Action Plan Marketing will show you how you can do much, much more.

A well-known marketing coach, consultant and web developer, Middleton no longer networks, mails marketing materials or makes cold calls. "It took me a long time to really figure out how to market myself online," he says, "but I cracked the code a few years ago, and business has never slowed down since. I love teaching people how to attract new clients. I especially enjoy sharing my inside secrets of using the Internet to market services virtually."

Middleton practices what he preaches. He has an eZine, More Clients, which goes

out to more than 14,000 people every week. He sells his marketing manuals, tape programs and teleclasses from his web site <http://www.actionplan.com>.

During his discussion, Middleton will show you:

- How to create an attention-getting marketing message.
- What you must put on your web site or suffer the consequences.
- How to publish articles and make presentations online.
- How to make sure people never forget you with a high-impact eZine.

### About Robert Middleton

A resident of Boulder Creek, Robert Middleton has been in business since 1984, and has taught hundreds of independent professionals how to market themselves more effectively.

## Independents' Roundtable

**When:** Tuesday, April 22, 6:30 p.m. networking and light dinner; 7-8:30 p.m. program

**Where:** The Lookout restaurant at the Sunnyvale Golf Course, 605 Macara Ave., in Sunnyvale. Take 101 to Matilda, exit toward Sunnyvale, turn right on Maude, right on Macara.

**Price:** \$10 members, \$20 non-members (No shows will be billed.) Beverages and a buffet will be served. Free parking.

**RSVP:** By Monday, April 21. Register online at Acteva, <http://www.acteva.com/go/sviabc> or by calling toll-free 1-877-422-8382 between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. Pacific time (there is an additional \$1 charge for registering by phone).

## Beyond the Valley — News from IABC

### IABC Toronto 2003 — Your Meeting Place

Join us at the meeting place and feel a sense of renewal.

This year's upcoming IABC international conference in Toronto, from June 8-11, includes six educational tracks to deepen your expertise and explore new areas of communication: Employee Communication, Public Relations, Strategy & Counsel, Marketing & Brand, Business Management and Skills Development. At the end of the day, you can relax and enjoy ethnically diverse dining, walk the shore of Lake Ontario, visit the CN Tower, stroll through the city's multicultural markets, take in a show in a theater scene that rivals London and New York, or visit the city's many shopping destinations. For international visitors, the favorable exchange rate means that Toronto is a bargain!

Also, several extracurricular activities are planned. For more details and to register, visit <http://www.iabc.com>.

### IABC Teleseminars

Bring professional development directly into your office with IABC's all-new series of monthly teleseminars. This innovative training program allows you to get the latest strategies and insights in business communication from world-class authorities delivered straight to your desktop. With no expensive registration fees, travel expenses or time out of the office, IABC's seminar series is the most affordable and time-efficient training event you'll experience all year.

All teleseminars will be held twice on the scheduled day for global delivery:

- 8:00 - 9:00 am (Pacific Time)
- 4:00 - 5:00 pm (Pacific Time)

### Schedule

April 8, 2003: Building and Maintaining Relationships with Reporters

For details, visit <http://store.yahoo.com/iabcstore/teleseminars.html>.

MEET A MEMBER

Lila Kakuk



**What is your profession?**

I work for Hewlett-Packard in Employee Communications, which is part of the Corporate Global

Brand & Communications organization. I joined the company in 1997 as an intern for the employee print publication. Today, I'm the editor of *hpNOW*, HP's employee news and information intranet site. I collaborate with people inside and outside the company to determine the short-term and long-term content direction for *hpNOW*.

**How did you become involved with IABC?**

Support for IABC runs pretty high in my company. Several communicators at Hewlett-Packard are active IABC members,

and many of them have served or are serving in leadership positions. When I first joined HP, I started tagging along with my team to the luncheons. This was really my first exposure to professional networking; I was amazed by the fact that my co-workers seemed to know so many people from other companies.

**In what way did you initially participate?**

At first, I began attending the luncheons. Later, I participated in a discussion panel and then I volunteered for a project. The project was to pull together a panel of communications professionals to speak at San Jose State University. I got an unexpected benefit out of volunteer effort: I got to know my neighbor better. I had recently moved into a new neighborhood and I recruited my next-door neighbor to be a part of the panel. He was great; several students swarmed around him after the event.

**What do you get out of your involvement both personally and professionally?**

Professionally, my involvement with IABC keeps me current and not so internally focused. Personally, I find the luncheon presentations refreshing. I get a lot of satisfaction knowing that I'm walking away with new ideas and with more energy than what I walked in with — I'm learning something new.

**What is your recommendation for new members who would like to get involved and possibly volunteer?**

If you're uncomfortable walking up to strangers and saying hello, volunteer for a project. It's the easiest way to get to know people in IABC.

Welcome New IABC Members

Robyn Forman

Laura Mariani

Barbara French

Tracy Oliver

Marty Grimes

Kelly O'Neil

Barbara Hounslow

Stephanie Simunic

Birgit Johnston

Betty Verstegen

Robert Kula

Susan Wright

Melinda Lee

Writers Wanted

Are you a writer who is looking for another forum to display your talent? Then *Communicators' Network* would love to hear from you. We are looking to build a stable of writers we can turn to help produce the content CN. Typical assignments might include covering an occasional lunch meeting, Independents' Roundtable, or other feature story idea.

All articles are bylined. For established writers, CN offers a perfect forum for displaying your writing ability to the rest of the membership. For new writers, we can also offer you a way to start building your clip files and mentor your fledgling talent with editing and suggestions for improving your style.

The time commitment can be as much or as little as you offer. Finally, being a CN writer/ reporter can open the door to meeting other members, as you may be called upon to do interviews...another great way to take the edge off of networking!

If you're interested, contact CN's editor Lori Maupas at [lori@worddiva.net](mailto:lori@worddiva.net).

# Who To Contact at SV-IABC

*Communicators' Network* is published monthly by SV-IABC. News and commentary are welcome.

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Open

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### Meetings

SV-IABC program luncheons are usually held the second Thursday of the month, and Independents' Roundtable evening meetings are typically the last Tuesday of each month. Non-members are welcome.

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Open

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