

BOOK DESIGN NEWS

Autumn 1993

"I'VE NEVER MET A BOOK I DIDN'T LIKE!"

WHAT'S NEW

• *New Scanner.* I picked up a small hand-held scanner last month. It's not much but it enables me to put photos, ornaments, and logos in my design layouts. While the quality of the photos is not the greatest, having the photos in place helps to give a little better look to the layouts and helps me to solve many of the problems that exist with photo/text design. Having the images on the computer makes adjustments and sizing a snap. Those days of going back and forth to the copier, cutting and pasting are almost over!

• *Special Offer.* For the last several years most of my design work has been for major book publishers in the New York City area. Publishers such as Simon & Schuster, Harper Collins, Bantam, etc. Because of the available technology of fax/modems, I have decided to introduce myself nationally. A few of you will be receiving an unusual "Special offer." I am offering a special introductory book design to say *thanks* for getting to know me and my work. Am I crazy or what?! This offer is good through this year. Are *you* interested?

As many of you already know, I have expanded nationally. I am looking forward to working with publishers all over the country. I was born in Champaign, Illinois. I went to art school in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. My dad grew up in Illinois, my mother grew up in Colorado, my sister and family live in California and my wife's family is all over Wisconsin, Illinois and Pennsylvania. I have had the opportunity to visit all of the 48 continental United States and was in Europe in the service. We took a 13-state vacation this summer and would like to double that the next trip we take. I want my daughter to see this beautiful country of ours. Each state has its own flavor, just as each book should have its own. We should strive to keep that individuality. While there are standards and conventions that are tried and true, we are individuals based on a common foundation.

Interactive books on computer are making the news today. While I think this is an exciting new direction for books, the traditional paper book will *never* be replaced. Many will oppose the computer books, but we must remember the reason for books, regardless of the medium, is to inform, entertain, and educate. If this new product will meet those needs, then great. My true love is the design of traditional books, but am interested in this new "computer book." They need to be carefully designed, too!

The leaves are now beginning to turn in Vermont. It is such a beautiful sight, like watching the elements of a book come together. Suddenly, after months of build-up, all of the trees explode with vibrant color. Wow! One final hurrah before the restful months of winter.



If you don't have a water cooler in your work area, I highly recommend looking into it. For good health and physical fitness, it is imperative to drink lots of water. So many people drink lots of coffee, juice, soda, but no water. I have found it so much easier to get a soda out of the refriger-

erator instead of pulling out a jug of water, unscrewing the cap, pouring the water, and putting the jug back in the refrigerator. Besides, the water came from the tap and it just doesn't taste right.

Anyway, I am currently renting a water cooler and it is great! It uses 6-gallon water jugs and the price/gallon is cheaper than jugs of water bought in the store. The cooler keeps the water nice and cold, is easy to pour, and I have the machine (which takes up very little room) right by the main doorway between the kitchen and my office and now it is soooo easy to drink water. I am feeling much better these days. Check into it.

Okay. Time for a little business. Book design is serious business. Today's computers and software are enabling everybody to become designers with little or no training. Does owning a timing light make me a mechanic? Make sure the people currently doing your book designs *are* book designers. Are they capable of designing with pencil and paper?

Remember . . . a good book design is never noticed by the reader, but a bad one will get in the way like a pesty fly. A lot of skilled people are necessary to produce a quality book. Don't allow all of the time, money and hard work go to waste because of a mediocre design.

Doing book designs on computer have many advantages over tissues. We are able to solve so many more design/composition problems much

NEXT ISSUE:

- A progress report on my indoor rowing season. I made the finals at the '92 World Championships. Suffered through last season with a bad case of the gout. Will I be back to championship form this year or will it be another year before I challenge for the "Silver Hammer?"
- I am working with my new scanner developing means for producing quick and accurate 8-10 page photo sections. Stay tuned as we follow this exciting adventure. Will the days of making endless trips to the copier and waxer be over?

quicker now with computers and making revisions is much easier. Be alert, the layouts can look nice but the spec page *must* be complete and accurate.

So, when the next manuscript lands on your desk, think about all of the other skills you demand in putting this book together. Don't let the design be done by just *anyone*.

I've recently designed:

SuperSelf, Charles Givens, Simon & Schuster

Eat Smart, Think Smart, Robert Haas,

Simon & Schuster

Steve McQueen, Donald I. Fine, Inc.

Avoiding the Heart Surgery Trap,

Regnery Gateway

All You Need to Know About the Music

Business, Simon & Schuster

Legends In Their Own Time, Prentice Hall Press

The Leader In You, Dale Carnegie Associates,

Simon & Schuster

John's Famous Potato Chips

Yes, it's true. This is a recipe in a book design newsletter. Not only do I design books, I design food! I've been making these chips since 1979 and have shared this little secret with thousands of people. My recipe has even been published! It really is so simple it's embarrassing. For those of you that know me, read my newsletter, or have received my design presentation packet, know that I am really an athlete that designs books in between workouts. I love potato chips and we all know how fatty potato chips are. My wife and I purchased a microwave oven in '79 and I decided to experiment with all kinds of foods. Well, to my delight, I found I could make the perfect potato chip in the microwave. No fat, just pure potato! Here's the scoop . . .

Any potato will do. You'll find that each type of potato has it's own taste. Thinly slice the potato (I slice them by hand using one of those nifty Quikut knives that are advertised on TV that can cut cans, nails, etc. and then continue to thinly slice tomatoes. I'm sure you've seen them. Any sharp knife will do.) and lay the slices on a microwave rack that allows air to get up and through the rack. In other words, the rack must not be flat. I use one with grooves. As the potato cooks, the moisture is removed and if the slices are on a flat surface, the potato will cook to the surface. Use something like a bacon rack. An average size potato will take approximately 10 minutes. Each potato is different and the thickness and number of slices will vary the cooking time. You need to watch each time you try this until you get a feel for how long it should take. Keep punching in another minute, or whatever, until you get the chips the way you like them. The potatoes will turn brown, but the best ones will turn light brown. The chips should break just like the real thing. You can experiment by putting different toppings on the slices before cooking. I use salt or McCormick's Season-All. Have fun, eat healthy, and enjoy. If you need help with your chips or your book designs, just call!