



passion of *the pen*

by Jean Campo



Outside the boardroom, CEO members and spouses enrich their lives by exploring their passions and pursuits in myriad ways – some paint, some support pet projects, some write. From embarking on profound personal journeys to swimming with the proverbial “sharks,” here are a few CEOers who express themselves through the written word.

1 Expressing Gratitude

In **Walter Green**’s book, *This Is the Moment!: How One Man’s Yearlong Journey Captured the Power of Extraordinary Gratitude* (Hay House, 2010), he shares his unique idea of expressing explicit gratitude to those who have been

important in life while they are alive and well. Walter takes his readers on his gratitude journey to visit 44 people around the United States and abroad. He says he felt like he “struck gold” on this “victory lap” and wrote the book to share these discoveries with others. Walter gives readers all the tools

needed to achieve the peace of mind that can only come from having no regrets for things left unsaid. In the process, they can enrich their lives and their important relationships. Walter believes this is a special gift to oneself and to one’s life influencers. *This Is the Moment* has been described as “truly magical and life-changing.”

2 Family Connections

A commercial interior designer by trade, CEO spouse **Paula Jo Boykin**, ASID, has always possessed a passion for the humanities and the written word. In 1991, ten years after starting her hotel and restaurant design company, Spectrum, she published a college textbook, *Hotel Guestroom Design* (Kendall Hunt Publishing Company). Now the writing itch has resurfaced. She is co-authoring a book with her son, Dr. Thomas R. Duncan, a chiropractor and member of Entrepreneur’s Organization (EO). She came up with the idea after watching him and his friends graduate from chiropractic school. Burdened with debt, many moved into existing practices filled with dreary décor, having no funds to decorate. Fully aware that a professional environment for incoming patients was important, Boykin decided to write an office design guidebook that would be both helpful and cost-efficient for these young doctors. And, after watching Tom host an educational forum, Paula began to see her charming son in a different light: “Tom has always been charismatic, but after seeing him as an engaging and informative professional, I realized that it would be a wonderful experience to work with him in this capacity.”

3 Family Collections

After learning more about the origins of the family business, including his grandparents’ dedication and sacrifice for the company

during The Great Depression, **Dave Ransburg** started collecting Ransburg stoneware and metalware in the 1990s. This collection led him to formally recount the company’s history *The Ransburg Collection: Hand-Painted Stoneware and Decorated Metalware* (Converse Publishing Company, 2000), on which he collaborated with his brother, Tom. He views the book as “a great tribute” to his grandfather, a man he was close to in his childhood and who he learned to appreciate even more following his death. The Harper J. Ransburg Co. began as a glass cutting company in 1911 by his grandfather of the same name and quickly prospered into producing decorated candles, glassware, stoneware and metalware. Though he and his brother spent much of their childhood playing around the factory, Dave didn’t take a serious interest in the company until a family reunion in the early 1990s. Dave’s impressive collection currently exceeds over 2,000 pieces, and though production has ceased, Ransburg items continue to be in large demand for collectors of iconic Americana.

4 Educated Investing

Mark Hebner nicknamed his 400-page tome, *Index Funds: The 12-Step Program for Active Investors* (IFA Publishing, 2007) as “rehab for stock-aholics.” His goal was to educate others on all he learned in his own quest to become a successful investor. After a fellow YPOer died in a car accident, his widow approached Mark to ask for help with her investments. Though he already studied finance and completed an MBA program, he felt inadequate in his knowledge on investing and began delving into books such as Burton Malkiel’s *A Random Walk Down Wall Street*. What he learned surprised him. “The more I read, the more curious and surprised I was about the failure of active investment,” he says. He soon

became a strong advocate of the index fund investment philosophy. Looking back on his time as an active investor, he realized he had missed out on tens of millions of dollars by not fully understanding the complexity and nuances of the investment game. He now says he’s “happy to be on the path to salvation.” Mark had the most fun with his work when he commissioned a professional artist to illustrate each chapter, adding “humor and personality” to what otherwise might be viewed as a dry topic.

5 A Second Career

Harvey Mackay’s most treasured book is his first, *Swim with the Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive: Outsell, Outmanage, Outmotivate, and Outnegotiate Your Competition* (William Morrow and Company, 1988), which has sold over five million copies and is on the list of *The New York Times* 15 most inspirational business books of all time. Its great success led him to pen five more books and embark on an unexpected second career. When asked if he would write a second book, he laughed it off. “I had poured my guts into *Sharks*. I didn’t think I had anything left to say. But I started receiving many phone calls and letters that gave me fabulous ideas for what became my next book.”

His book success also led him to a rewarding – yet demanding – speaking career. He speaks roughly once a week all over the world, in countries including China, India, Russia and Myanmar, to which he and his wife traveled with CEO in 2008. With sales of more than 10 million books under his belt, Harvey shows no signs of slowing down. Each week, he writes a nationally syndicated column, and he’s also at work on his seventh book, tentatively titled *The Mackay MBA of Selling in the Real World*. Harvey has even figured out what will be engraved on his tombstone: “He couldn’t sleep fast enough.” Indeed. ☺