



The Quill

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SOCIETY FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Looking Backwards and Forwards

Celebrating achievements and working towards the future

by Ted Edwins, Chapter President

To prepare for this month's article, I decided to look back in the Quill archive to see what my predecessors had written. I had hoped to steal some ideas but what I found instead is evidence that we are continuing our growth as a chapter. What is clear is that we are a group of people who do some amazing things and are contributing to the creation a vibrant community of technical communicators.

This year we had some significant accomplishments to celebrate:

- We recognized valuable contributions to the chapter by individuals. Leanne Logan was made an Associate Fellow of the STC for her many years of varied activities in the community, the chapter, and the Society. In addition, we recognized Deb Maskens and Catherine Schryer with Distinguished Chapter Service Awards for their chapter activities.
- Our February workshop with Kim Goodwin of Cooper Interaction Design was well attended and was financially successful. We thank Heather Martin and her committee for a job well done.
- Our website received a new look and reorganization thanks to Stephen Burke and the Web Committee.
- The Quill also received a new look and continued the tradition of innovation and quality writing. Congratulations to Andrea Braniff and her committee. Last year, the Quill won an International Newsletter Competition Award of Excellence under the direction of Karen Hess.
- We continued our support of the Technical Communication program at Fanshawe College by offering a scholarship of \$500. We also received many applications for our University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier student scholarships this year.
- The Contractors and Independent Consultants SIG was very active with several meetings due in large part to the organizational efforts of Elaine Garnet.
- We shook up our general meetings with new locations and a variety of meeting topics. We thank Shannon Hilker and her program committee for the extra work needed to make these meetings a reality.
- The Public Relations portfolio was revived this year thanks to Debbie Kerr. We look forward to developing our communication initiatives with Debbie's help.
- We are working with the Fanshawe College Technical Communication students and our London and Sarnia area members to establish either a student chapter or a regular chapter to be based in London.

These were the highlights of the year, but by no means is this an all-encompassing list. Every person on the council contributed in many ways to the success of the chapter. There are also many volunteers, some official committee members, others who are co-workers of volunteers, who chip in to offer their talents when needed. We recognize and appreciate those people as well.

The future of the chapter looks very bright indeed. We have made some excellent additions to the council as some new people step forward to accept increased responsibilities. In addition, many familiar faces return to council with ideas for improvement.

Continued on page 8.



From the editor:

Another STC year is coming to an end. Thank you to all those who contributed articles, suggestions, and feedback over the last year. You have helped expand the subjects we've addressed in our chapter newsletter.

I've enjoyed the past year as editor, and look forward to continuing my role next year. I can't wait to meet more of my peers and learn from their talent and experience.

Don't forget that this is the last issue of the Quill this season, as we will be on-break until September. My committee and I look forward to seeing you in the fall. Feel free to contact me over the summer with any ideas or suggestions you may have at acb@campana.com. See you at the barbeque.

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When I was your age...

Next time you are washing your hands and complain because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things used to be...

Here are some facts from the 1500s

Most people got married in June, because they took their yearly bath in May and still smelled pretty good by June. However, they were starting to smell, so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor.

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, next all the other sons and men, next the women and finally the children; last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it; hence the saying, Don't throw the baby out with the bath water.

Houses had thatched roofs (thick straw) piled high, with no wood beneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the dogs, cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof; hence the saying It's raining cats and dogs.

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could really mess up a bed. A bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection; hence canopy beds came into existence.

The floor was dirt, and only the wealthy had something other than dirt; hence the saying dirt poor.

The Value of the Modern Communicator

The key is understanding the value you can bring to a company

by Selene MacLeod, Feature Writer

In the aftermath of the mid-90s software boom, an alarming number of companies have gone under. Although job insecurity is a sad fact in any industry, there are some things a savvy tech writer can do to prepare for such inevitable hardships, namely learning a better approach both to looking for work and to the discipline of technical writing. I recently met with Peter Szabo of CheckFree i-Solutions, and Paul Sop of Intellitactics, to gain some insight into the issue

Szabo graduated with a BA in English from the University of Toronto, and combined his education with "a lot of experience." He started out by asking friends if he could design brochures, and has done work for varied clients, including writing medical, dental, and chiropractic documents. "It wasn't until I came to Waterloo that they called it tech writing," Szabo comments.

"The key is to redefine and broaden the definition of tech writing," says Szabo, when asked how a tech writer might cope with the difficulty of finding work in a changing marketplace. Szabo is the current Documentation Coordinator, formerly Documentation Team Lead, at CheckFree. In a decision to save the company money, CheckFree laid off over 60 of its employees in late March, including the entire documentation team.

He has been at CheckFree for three years, but is no stranger to networking and contract work. Some writers frown on the necessity of contract work, but Szabo remarks that one can make more money on contract, and can maintain a network of contacts that may be important later. "It's a real attitude change," he says, "...how you approach networking. What inevitably happens is when they find out what I do, then they have the choice to say 'oh, I need someone'...they're under no obligation. "It's about the context of the conversation" says Szabo. "There will always be more writers than job openings," although the situation is not nearly as bleak as it may seem. "I think people will always need communication specialists," he adds. "They'll always need someone who knows how to write, for whatever industry."

Paul Sop of Intellitactics takes a more philosophical approach to the dilemma. Sop and his brother, John, founded Intellitactics in 1996. The Kitchener based company manufactures network security software, and is a leader in the industry. In early April, the company laid off over 20 of its employees. It was a difficult decision, but Sop would like to

re-hire a documentation team, because, he says "I was impressed at the calibre of writers we had. The professionalism and consistency that they were able to achieve was nothing short of remarkable, and (they) were doing it without a lot of accolade - they under promised and over delivered." He hopes to "bring them back into a better structure, one with more leadership strictly in a knowledge type domain... (but first) I have to find a suitable leader."

Sop draws a line between software developers and computer scientists, and between technical writers and people "in a discipline." "If you're in a discipline," he explains, "you (take) the disciplined approach, and then you can become authoritative. People respect your opinions because you are able to see their problem as a subset of all the (other) problems." This is an intriguing approach to technical writing, as many tech writers seem to find themselves writing in fields in which they have little experience.

Sop also explains that many businesses fail due to bad business practices, inflated financial pressures, and a lack of communication within the company. His personal philosophy, what he calls a "gospel of three forms," is one that combines "What you call things; where you do the work; and love." By doing so, Sop hopes to achieve a "consistent culture," one based on shared knowledge and a strong theoretical structure, where knowledge is accessible. If a tech writer is able to work within such a structure, Sop notes, the ability to organize knowledge, and the passion to engage an audience, may be one of the keys to continued success. "People will always want someone to write," he remarks. "If you want to make sure you are indispensable, then make yourself indispensable. The only thing that really matters is...the ability to use information."

For more about these companies, please check out their websites:

<http://www.checkfreeisolutions.com>, and <http://www.intellitactics.com> *

International Online Competition Winners

The results are in...

Khalix Application Layer - User Help Version 3.2.1 by Gilda Spitz and Andrea Sewell. Award of Merit.

Membership Transactions and Member Maintenance Guide by Steve Schildroth. Award of Excellence.



Our Year-end Celebration

Good food, good people, good times

by Shannon Hilker, Program Manager

It's hard to believe, but summer is almost here! For the STC, summer brings a much needed break for the volunteers and members alike. This year, we want to end the session with a bang and you're invited to join in the fun! Read on for all the details, and don't forget to RSVP on or before Thursday May 30th!

Who?

All Southwestern Ontario STC members, our volunteers and guests.

What?

STC Year-End Barbecue/Picnic. Fully-catered, this year's menu includes a feast of hamburgers, hot dogs, chicken and corn on the cob, with a variety of salads, veggies, fresh fruit and pies. Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages will also be available, with one complimentary drink ticket for each guest.

Where?

Bingemans Park (www.bingemans.com) at the Riverside Shelter

When?

Tuesday, June 4th (arrive around 5:30, dinner served at 6:30)

Why?

To have a good time--relaxing and socializing with your fellow STC members. To RSVP, email smh@campana.com or call 519.747.5222 ext. 263. Be sure to indicate whether or not you are planning to come and include the number of adults. *



The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on the floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they kept adding more thresh until when you opened the door it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entryway; hence a threshold.

In those old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes the stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while; hence the rhyme, "peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old."

Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man could bring home the bacon. They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and chew the fat.

Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with a high acid content caused some of the lead to leak onto the food causing lead poisoning and death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered poisonous.

England is old and small, and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a bone-house and reuse the grave. When reopening these coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside, and they realized they had been burying people alive. So they thought they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin, up through the ground, and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night the graveyard shift to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be saved by the bell or was considered a dead ringer.



Buzz on???

Well, ever since English has been a language, *off* has functioned as both adverb (it has six adverbial senses) and preposition (it has five prepositional senses). The 17th century saw the birth of *off*'s adjectival functions (they total nine), and the 18th century marked the advent of its verb functions (two intransitive, one transitive). Our correspondents wanted to know two things: how should *off* be labeled when it turns up in such phrases as "knock off" and "tip off," and what is the function of *off* in "top off," meaning "to resupply or refill to capacity?"

We'll supply the easy answer first off: when *off* follows such verbs as "knock" and "tip" (to say nothing of "rip," "rub," "buzz," "bug," "write," "stop," "show" and dozens of others)—when *off* follows such verbs, it functions as part of the verb. But unlike those verbs, which, when combined with *off*, create their own meaning, when "top off" drops its *off*, it does not result in a new meaning. While "polishing the silver" is a far cry from "polishing off the cake," adding *off* to "top" doesn't change its meaning, it intensifies it. And as we all remember from grammar class, giving force or emphasis to a verb is a noble adverbial pursuit.

Away With Words

Combining textual and visual language

by Shannon Hilker, Program Manager

On Tuesday April 2nd, Patrick Hofmann, a technical writer turned visual information engineer from Quarry Integrated Communications, talked about the benefits and pitfalls of graphical documentation and graphics on the web.

In the past, graphics were successfully used for assembly instructions, the use of physical objects, and software instruction. Visual traffic was reduced through use of symbols and graphics to simplify instruction and cross language barriers. Why? Because simple images aid audiences in scanning documentation for conveyed meaning.

But then came the web and things started to get out of hand. Web authors used oversized graphics and animations with large file sizes resulting in distracting and unorganized layout and design.

But that was then and this is now.

Audiences, be they students assembling a computer desk or experienced software users crave the speed with which graphics and symbols enable them to process information. They love the fast, immediate, short spurts of information that images can provide.

Patrick took us through a list of visualization in use today, explaining the uses of these forms and the uses, benefits and drawbacks of each:

| Form of Visualization | Uses and Benefits | Drawbacks |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| Static illustration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use to show physical objects, abstract concepts, symbols and icons. - Not intrusive and require similar reading and digestive techniques as text | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You can only show transition if you split the graphic into "comic" frames |
| Static photography | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use to show physical objects, real life subjects and textures. - Ideal for mood. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not ideal for instruction because of the visual traffic and noise. - You can only show transition if you split the graphic into "comic" frames. |
| Animated illustration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ideal for visualizing instruction with 3D things. - They are great at showing transition between different states as well as illustrating change over time. - Use to attract attention to a single element and to alert the user of updated information. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can attract too much attention. - Can be irritating – be sure to animate one time only. Let users reactivate, if they want to see it again. |
| Animated photography (video) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ideal for showing movement of the human body, animals, or complex maneuvers. - You can convey the personality of a speaker. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently the broadcast quality on the web and mobile devices is poor. - The files are difficult to maintain. |
| Interactive visuals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Users can interact with visuals – they can zoom in and out, pan left and right, and show and hide information. - You can provide mouseovers on web pages to show other objects in the same space or nearby and to highlight. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make sure zooming, panning and showing/hiding are voluntary. - Can be hard to maintain unless you are using SVG (Scalable Vector Graphics) |



If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all . . .

Images can be a great way to simplify tasks, as long as we remember the following:

1. Make sure graphics and content have a purpose, whether they are to inform, direct, entertain, warn, or all of the above.
2. Limit the number of graphics to five per page.
3. Don't reinvent the wheel: follow iconic convention – think of road signs. Road signs use simple colours and shapes to inform and warn.

The evolution of visual language can already be seen on the web – visuals provide content (maps, product photos), help us navigate (road signs, show what's behind something), organize information (bullets, icons, separate areas) and decorate (mood, concept, brands).

In closing Patrick left us with some things to keep in mind as we forge ahead in the use of visuals:

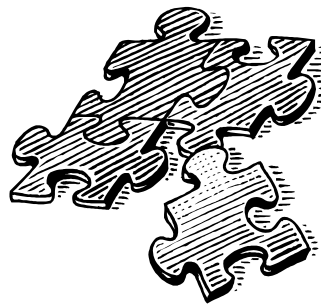
- Visuals that provide content may also inform, instruct and warn.
- When users believe the graphic has value, they will wait for it to load.
- Visuals that convey moods, concepts or brands are risky – they can be costly, misinterpreted and simply ineffective.
- Remember the lifespan of symbols - the visual you use today, may mean nothing five years from now.

With all this talk about graphics, should Technical Writers be concerned? Patrick says no – the most effective way to communicate is through the successful combination of textual and visual language. *

Word Search

by Meredith Ballaban, Puzzle Maker

C R S W A M I E W V S G V P Q
 D O P V E N F I V L N C W T H
 O X M Q F X M B T I D J P S P
 C J Y M A Z L D T F I Y I R A
 U V I S U A L L I T E R A C Y
 M G X R O N U C L P L V O D L
 E N L S H S I I S A N N E B F
 N I J U N E U C Y H V V S S Q
 T H D O D N T O A E H K D I I
 A S C O L P U O N T K G C G V
 T I J N U T J T R F I Z V N B
 I L Y T B G I A T I P O J S N
 O B Y S V O Z I J Q C R N I N
 N U B A N E D I U G E L Y T S
 O P Z S F R E E L A N C E E D



communication
 design
 layout
 style guide
 consulting
 documentation
 publishing
 visual literacy
 conventions
 freelance
 rhetoric

or so goes the old saying. Today we have something nice to say about a term sometimes associated with meanness: dumbbell.

Children know dumbbell as a playground taunt applied to someone considered dull or stupid. Weight trainers know dumbbell as one of a pair of short bars with weights at each end. But even smart children and body builders probably wouldn't know that the term also has a musical application: the original dumbbell named an apparatus similar to that used to ring a church bell; this dumbbell went on to establish itself as a handy aid for folks interested in learning bell-ringing.

It took more than two hundred years for dumbbell to develop its slang sense "stupid person." How did that come to pass? We'd like to consider ourselves too smart to pin the development on the strong silent type, so instead we'll point out the "dumb" in dumbbell originally referred to the lack of noise made by the instrument and eventually was associated with a secondary sense of "dumb," namely, that referring to something meaningless or stupid.

Does all this talk ring a bell about the dum dum bullet? It shouldn't. This dum dum, a hollow-pointed missile that expands more than usual upon hitting an object, was named for the Asian-Indian town where it was first manufactured, and bears no etymological kinship with the phonetically similar "dumb."

Introducing Your New Council

Drumroll please

by Lynda Baxter, Nominations Chair

I'm delighted to report that the following volunteers have signed on to serve our chapter in the coming year. The mix of veteran leaders and new recruits will provide both continuity and fresh perspective as we anticipate another fine year of chapter activities and services.

Some changes you'll notice are the inevitable result of the nominations process as we try to stretch available resources to fit many roles. Hospitality will function within the Program portfolio. The Senior Programming Advisor will seek to target some events to meet the needs and interests of more senior members. We're hoping that the web archives project will move forward. Probably the most significant decision is to take a break from the Competition and use the year off to retool the process and recruit fresh volunteers.

Don't think that this list is final! There's room for you! There are still vacancies, and we'll be looking for short-term volunteers for the Education and Scholarship committees as the year progresses. Remember, if you're involved, you get the chance to say how things will happen!

The official handover to the new council will occur at the Council meeting on May 21. In the meantime our current council will wind up their responsibilities and then take a well-earned break. To them we say, "Thank you for your time, your expertise and your enthusiasm. We couldn't have done it without you!"

We'll really miss George Zador, Carrie Spira and Opal Gamble as they retire from council. Opal has kept our memories on track with her faithful minute taking at council meetings, Carrie has managed our growing membership records and George has paid the bills and educated us on budgets and balance sheets. Thanks guys!

Now for the drum roll! The following list is presented by your nominating committee: Holly Curtis, Ted Edwins, Karen Hess, Heather Martin, Deb Maskens, Cathy McNair, Lori Shantz and Lynda Baxter. *

Alternate Word Uses

ABSENTEE : A missing golfing accessory.

ACOUSTIC : An instrument used in shooting pool.

ACCRUE : People who work on a ship.

ADAMANT : the very first insect.

ADORABLE : What you ring when you go visiting.

ALARMS : What an octopus is.

ANTIDOTE : The reason Mom's sister keeps hugging you every time she can catch you.

ANTELOPE : Why Grandpa won't forgive uncle!

ANTISOCIAL : Mother's sister being friendly.

ANTE MERIDIEM : That's why he's my uncle.

ASPIRE : Where dead donkeys are cremated.

ATLAS : Finally

AVOIDABLE : What a bullfighter tries to do.

BIOLOGY : Study of shopping habits

BUDGET: An attempt to live below your yearnings.

CANTALOUPE : Got to get married in church.

CARNATION : Country where everybody has a four wheeler.

CLIMATE : The only thing you can do with a ladder.

Your Council...

| | | | |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| President | Ted Edwins | Public Relations Manager | Debbie Kerr |
| Vice-President | Vacant | PR Committee: | Gail Bryson |
| Past President | Lynda Baxter | Scholarship Manager | Christy Simard |
| Secretary/Recorder | Christa Boese | Scholarship Committee | Sherry McMenemy |
| Treasurer | Carol Lawless | Volunteer Manager | Lori Shantz |
| Education Manager | Elaine Rudelock | Webmaster | Stephan Burles |
| Education Committee | Heather Martin | Archives project | Lynda Baxter/Cathy McNair |
| | Judy Newell | CIC SIG Coordinator | Elaine Gernet |
| | Paul Kostuk | | |
| Email List Administrator | Heidi Mar | Management SIG Coordinator | Vacant |
| Employment Manager | Wartin Eberl | Online SIG Coordinator | Vacant |
| Membership Manager | | Academic Liaisons | |
| | Andrea Brantiff | Faculty LW | Deb Maskens |
| Newsletter Editor | Gail Bryson | Student LW | Vacant |
| Newsletter Committee | Shannon Hillier | Faculty WLU | David Blads |
| | Selena MacLeod | Student WLU | Vacant |
| | Marodith Ballaban | Faculty Fanshawe | Otte Rosenkrantz |
| Copy Editor | Margie Yundt | Student Fanshawe | Catherine Haycock |
| Mailbox/Auxiliary List | Barb Girling | | |
| | | | |
| Program Manager | Shannon Hillier | | |
| Program Committee | Holly Curtis | | |
| | Heidi Mar | | |
| | Heather Martin | | |
| | Sherry McMenemy | | |
| Hospitality/Food Coordinator/Creator | Leo Petipas | | |
| Senior Programming Advisor | Cathy McNair | | |



April Council Meeting Minutes

The end of the year draws near

by Opal Gamble, Recorder

Attendees

- Ted Edwins - President
- Shannon Hilker - Program Manager
- Heidi Marr - Education Manager
- Debbie Kerr - PR Manager
- Leo Petipas - Hospitality Manager
- Opal Gamble - Recorder
- George Zador - Treasurer
- Lynda Baxter - Past President

Nominations

- Lynda reviewed the new council members (see Southwestern Ontario STC Council 2002-2003.doc).
- George suggests that we find a registrar for Education day - he will document the registrar procedure.
- MOTION (Leo): roll Hospitality into the Program.
Seconded by Heidi.
Passed unanimously.
Shannon will define specific rolls for the Program portfolio.
- Debbie suggests that we move Education and Scholarship PR rolls into the main PR portfolio.
For now, all media must be approved/viewed by the PR manager before publication.
- Lynda is calling for council volunteers. Send suggestions to Lynda.
- MOTION (Lynda): ratify the council list, as presented.
Seconded by Shannon.
Passed unanimously.

Competition

- MOTION (Ted): There will be no competition run by the Southwestern Ontario Chapter in the 2002-2003 year to facilitate a restructuring of the event. (Restructuring

could include making the event biannual, adding awards/incentives for judges, and so on.)
Seconded by Debbie.
Passed unanimously.

Budget

- George reviewed the budget: \$19 673.54 in bank: \$30 000.00 in investments (\$700-800 in interest on May 1, 2002).
- MOTION (Ted): roll over the certificate of deposit for 364 days.
Seconded: Lynda.
Passed unanimously.
- To get the books finalized promptly, all requests for cheques and subsequent cashing of those cheques must occur before June 10. Contact George if you have outstanding expenses to settle.

New Business

- The display of local competition winners at a general meeting will occur in September.
- The goal setting meeting for 2002-2003 council members will occur June 8, 2002, 8:30 am. Venue TBA.
- Annual picnic will be on the first Tuesday in June (4) and will be a drop-in format. Details and location TBA shortly.
- Carolyn Watt, a senior Toronto Chapter member, is asking for support in the creation of a Special Needs SIG.
- MOTION (Lynda): Current sitting SOC president gets \$1000 CDN to go to the International Conference. S/He must attend the Sunday Leadership day sessions and do a presentation on return.
Seconded: Heidi.
Passed unanimously. *

CROSS-EYED

TEACHER : A teacher that loses control over her pupils.

CROWBAR: Where birds can get a drink.

DAMNATION : Beaver country

DARE : Not here.

DEBUT : De part of the body you must park to be seated.

DECAY : De letter which comes after de J.

DOGMA : Affectionate parent of the little s.o.b.

DOGMATIC : Run by canine power.

DONKEY : Instrument to get you into the godfather's house

ECLIPSE : What an English barber does for a living.

FOBIA : The fear of misspelled words

FORUM : In favor of drinking Bacardi

HEROES : What a guy in a boat does.

HUMBUG : A singing cockroach

ILLEGAL : A sick bird

INFANTRY : A sapling.

INFORMATION : How ducks are supposed to fly !

INTENSE : Where campers sleep.

KIDNEY: Midpoint of a child's leg.

LOCOMOTIVE : A crazy reason.

Council Meetings

Getting there

Directions from Toronto:

From Hwy 401 West. take Hwy 7/8 North to Kitchener. Follow Hwy 7 East, then exit north on Hwy 86 to Waterloo. Exit on Northfield Drive and merge right. Then, turn right on Weber Street (2nd set of lights).

Turn right on Randall Drive (1st street). The entrance to Campana (99 Randall Drive) is on the right, just before the railway tracks (in the Pressworks Technology Park).



Comments made in the year 1957

"I'll tell you one thing, if things keep going the way they are, it's going to be impossible to buy a week's groceries for \$20."

"Have you seen the new cars coming out next year? It won't be long before \$5000 will only buy a used one."

"If cigarettes keep going up in price, I'm going to quit. A quarter a pack is ridiculous.."

"Did you hear the post office is thinking about charging a dime just to mail a letter?"

"If they raise the minimum wage to \$1, nobody will be able to hire outside help at the store."

"When I first started driving, who would have thought gas would someday cost 29 cents a gallon. Guess we'd be better off leaving the car in the garage."

"Kids today are impossible. Those duck tail hair cuts make it impossible to stay groomed. Next thing you know, boys will be wearing their hair as long as the girls."

"I'm afraid to send my kids to the movies any more. Ever since they let Clark Gable get by with saying 'damn' in "Gone With The Wind," it seems every new movie has either 'hell' or 'damn' in it."

"I read the other day where some scientist thinks it's possible to put a man on the moon by the end of the century. They even have some fellows they call astronauts preparing for it down in Texas."

"Did you see where some baseball player just signed a contract for \$75,000 a year just to play ball? It wouldn't surprise me if someday they'll be making more than the president."

New Member Spotlight

Our chapter continues to grow

by Carrie Spira, Membership Manager

I'd like to extend a warm welcome to the following new, re-instated, transferring and senior STC members in our chapter:

New Members

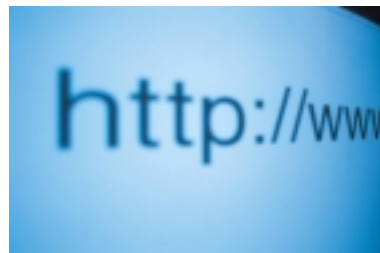
Peter Crisp
Angela Drysdale
Amy Fuller
Thila Varghese
Jill Zubrick
Karen McHutchion

New Senior Members

Wendy A. Darby
Leanne M. Rollins

Peter Crisp's company, EHS Corporation, is a document conversion firm specializing in the processing of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS's). EHS Corporation has been in business for three years, and with five employees, has recently branched into technical writing. Their recent application of XML to MSDS's is believed to have dramatically cut the costs of managing MSDS inventories. Currently, EHS Corporation is developing online safety courses on contract, and plans to expand into other areas of technical writing in the next few months. Peter is especially interested in exchanging ideas regarding the use of XML for structured document writing.

Peter's background is in engineering and health and safety. He is married to an artist, and is interested in applying engineering and art together. He likes to roller blade, work out, study languages, ballroom dance, renovate old houses, and do volunteer work. *



Check out exciting Southwestern Ontario Chapter stuff at www.stc.waterloo.on.ca.

Looking Backwards and Forwards

Continued from front page...

Some of the ideas for improvement include working behind the scenes to solidify the organization of the chapter. We have discussed adopting by-laws and seeking a more structured council. We want to develop more program activities for our senior members. We will continue to reach out to the community by establishing contacts with the educational organizations in the area.

To help us focus our thinking so that we can provide all the services that our members want, the council will hold a goal-setting meeting in June. At this meeting, we will determine the direction of the council and of the chapter for the coming year and years to come.

In closing, I want to thank all those people who sat on council and who volunteered to help in any way with chapter activities this year. Volunteering is a topic I have written about many times this year and I want to take another moment to recognize everyone's contribution to the chapter. This chapter exists because we all contribute in some way, each according to time or ability. With everyone working together, we can continue our tradition of improvement. To the new volunteers, I say, "see you in June" to the rest of you, "see you in September!" *

**Join Us October 3rd through 6th
at the annual STC Region 5
Conference, and you'll be
Geared for Success on Route 66**

Rev your engines and put the pedal to the metal — meet us on Route 66!

We'll be looking at the trends, emerging technologies, and fast-changing practices in our profession. Regardless of your interests, the conference stems are designed to meet your needs.

- Under the Hood: Writing and Editing
- Your Tool Kit: Technology & Applications
- Taking a Test Drive: Users & Usability
- Customized Models: Web & Graphics Design
- In the Driver's Seat: Career Development & Management

Hosted by the Oklahoma Chapter, this year's conference is scheduled for Thursday, October 3 through Sunday, October 6 at the Hilton Inn Northwest in Oklahoma City. Located on the Northwest Expressway, the hotel is within easy reach of major shopping districts and good food — Come discover Oklahoma City - the Capital of the New Century! Just a short ride from the hotel, you'll find the:

- Red Earth Indian Center,
- National Memorial at the bombing site, and
- National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum.

Mark your calendar now and plan on getting together with friends old and new to share your experience and expertise. Reflect on where we've been and where we're going; interact with colleagues; discuss tools, theories, and technologies. And most important — Have Fun!

The best way to share? As a conference presenter! Some of us are setting forth in new directions, while others build on the knowledge gained from past journeys. Whatever your background, consider submitting a proposal.

Presentations can vary in length. Sessions are typically 1 hour and 15 minutes long. You may develop a presentation to fill the entire time, bring together your own panel for a discussion, or submit a shorter presentation. Shorter presentations may be grouped around a topic by the program committee for delivery as a part of a panel or progression.

General Information

Select a presentation topic from one of the following conference stems:

Under the Hood: Writing and Editing
Writing, editing, document organization, and indexing are essential to the world of technical communication. This stem includes online and HTML documents, proposals, and multimedia presentations.

Your Tool Kit: Technology and Applications

Technical communicators today are constantly walking through new doors as they attempt to keep up with ever-changing technology and applications. Share your experiences about these methods, such as HTML-based help, intranet and Internet-based development, CBT applications, translation tools, CD-ROM delivery, JVB, SGML, database publishing, or single sourcing.

Taking a Test Drive: Users and Usability

What do users really want or need? An understanding of our users helps us do our job better. Submit proposals on techniques you have used, studies you have made, or any other suggestions to give technical communicators insight to the audience.

Customized Models: Web and Graphic Design

Understanding how to work with graphic designers and design principles is required when we use Internet delivery methods. Web and Graphic Design applies to traditional and evolving design principles used in communicating complex technical material.

In the Driver's Seat: Career Development and Management

Managing work, career, and professional development is a moving target. Where is our profession now? Where are we going? Submit proposals on topics such as how to keep projects on schedule and on budget.

how to integrate new technologies into the workplace, how to thrive as an independent contractor or consultant, how to work in a fast-paced learn environment, or how to handle quality control.

Formats

Select one of the following formats that reflects your presentation style:

Presentation

An in-depth analysis of a specific topic by one or more speakers.

(Multiple speakers may submit together, or, if necessary, speakers may be grouped by the program committee.)

Panel Discussion

A moderator leads a panel of experts as they provide opening and closing statements (3 to 10 minutes), analysis of the subject, and discussion involving questions and answers with the audience.

(Panelists may submit together, or, if necessary, panelists may be grouped by the program committee.)

Progression

An oral 5 to 10-minute presentation followed by audience discussion of approximately 15 minutes. Repeated in three rounds to three different audience groups.

(Presenters may submit together, or, if necessary, presenters may be grouped by the program committee.)

Workshop

An instructional presentation with hands-on audience activities. Can span one or two conference sessions.

Vendor

A presentation to demonstrate a product or service. Anyone interested in exhibiting as a vendor should contact Brannon Golden. brannon.golden@g2mx.tinker.af.mil.



The Region 5 Conference can provide a limited number of audio visual devices (from flip charts to LCD projectors).

Requests for any type of equipment must be included with the submittal form.

Presenters are responsible for providing their own handouts and computer equipment. If you need information about rentals in the Oklahoma City area, please contact Linda Stark (lbestark@swbell.net).

The program committee may, at its discretion, change the conference stem and presentation type from that proposed in your application.

Submit a Proposal

To submit a proposal, go to <http://www.stcregion.org/region5/conference2002/home.htm>. Complete the form and submit it online before June 15th.

If you have further questions, please contact either

FAY WASE: FATWASE@PRWCO.COM OR
SUZANNA LAURENT: SLAURENT@PROCTRY.NET.

We look forward to cruising with you on Route 66!

"I never thought I'd see the day all our kitchen appliances would be electric.. They are even making electric typewriters now."

"It's too bad things are so tough nowadays. I see where a few married women are having to work to make ends meet."

"It won't be long before young couples are going to have to hire someone to watch their kids so they can both work."

"Marriage doesn't mean a thing any more; those Hollywood stars seem to be getting divorced at the drop of a hat."

"I'm just afraid the Volkswagen car is going to open the door to a whole lot of foreign business."

"Thank goodness I won't live to see the day when the Government takes half our income in taxes. I sometimes wonder if we are electing the best people to Congress."

"The drive-in restaurant is convenient in nice weather, but I seriously doubt they will ever catch on."

"There is no sense going to Lincoln or Omaha anymore for a weekend. It costs nearly \$15 a night to stay in a hotel."

"No one can afford to be sick any more; \$35 a day in the hospital is too rich for my blood."

"If they think I'll pay 50 cents for a hair cut, forget it."

What is the Quill?

The **Quill** is the official newsletter of the Southwestern Ontario chapter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC). The **Quill** is published in Waterloo, Ontario monthly, except in January, July, and August, and distributed free to all local STC members. Material in this publication may be reprinted, provided the author and the Southwestern Ontario chapter of the STC are acknowledged. All readers are welcome to submit short articles, letters, and other interesting items relevant to technical communication to the editor, acb@campana.com. Please submit items by one week prior to the date of the general meeting.

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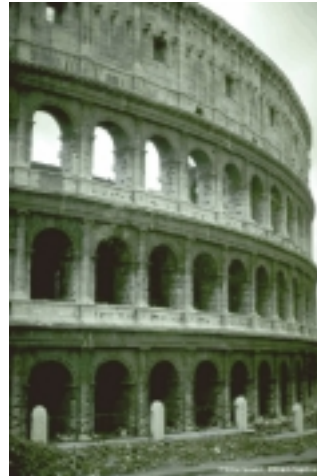
Ted Edwins, Selene MacLeod, Carrie Spira, Shannon Hilker, Lynda Baxter, and Opal Gamble

Advertising

To submit advertising, please consult with the editor, acb@campana.com. Advertising combining text and graphics *must* be supplied in graphic format.

Business card \$10
1/4 page \$30
(\$20 for 3 or more issues)
1/2 page \$40
(\$30 for 3 or more issues)
Full page \$80
(\$60 for 3 or more issues)

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