



The Quill

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SOCIETY FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Giving Back to the Community

A donation to the University of Waterloo

by Ted Edwins, Chapter President

On behalf of our membership, the Southwestern Ontario Chapter of the STC is proud to announce our donation of \$15,000 to a new communications program at the University of Waterloo. The donation will purchase a multimedia speaker's podium that will be used in the new Digital Arts Communication program at the University of Waterloo. The decision to make the donation was made after council listened to a presentation made by David Goodwin, University of Waterloo, and Deb Maskens, a past-president of the chapter who also teaches at the university.

Council's decision to make the donation was based upon the STC mission to promote the profession of technical communication. Our chapter is very interested in expanding the educational opportunities in our community for students and members. We have made great strides by offering more opportunities within the chapter as well as working cooperatively with educational institutions such as the University of Waterloo and Fanshawe College.

The money for the donation has been raised over the years through the careful planning of successive councils. Each year the chapter receives a membership rebate from the STC head office. Chapter activities, such as workshops and competitions, are planned to offer good value to the membership and to make a modest surplus that can then be used to fund other chapter activities such as the March Wine & Cheese, free telephone seminars for members, and the June BBQ.

We believe that this donation will be the start of a very exciting period and will further enhance the relationship between the chapter and the University of Waterloo. The benefits to the local technical communication community will be enormous: students will become aware of technical communications as a career; employers will hire highly skilled graduates; and the overall level of professional expertise will improve.

For more information, see the article *STC Sponsors UW in Digital Arts Communication Classroom* on page 3. *



It's hard to believe 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 two years as editor, and look forward to continuing on the council as Public Relations Manager 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. Debbie Kerr and her Newsletter committee look forward to seeing you in the fall.

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Fanshawe College Technical Writing Award

And the winner is...

by Christy Simard, Scholarship Manager

Barbecue

This American contribution to international cuisine actually originated in the Caribbean, and the word comes to us via Spanish from its Indian roots. The original sense of *barbecue* is that of a raised, wooden (later metal) framework used for either sleeping upon or curing meats. The Indians of Guiana called it a *babracot* and the Haitians a *barbacoa*. The Spanish evidently acquired the Haitian word and it came into English from the Spanish.

The earliest English cite, used for a sleeping platform, is from 1697. By 1733 the word was being used for an open-air, social gathering featuring the grilling of meat.

Barbecue has one false etymology that is commonly promulgated on the Internet and elsewhere. It is claimed that it comes from the French *barbe* (beard) and *queue* (tail); the idea being that an entire pig is roasted, from head, or beard, to tail. This is simply not true.

The Southwestern Ontario Chapter of the STC is pleased to announce that Brian Shaw is this year's winner of the Fanshawe College Technical Writing Award. This award recognizes the top academic performer in the Fanshawe College Technical Writing Certificate Program with \$500 and a free STC membership.

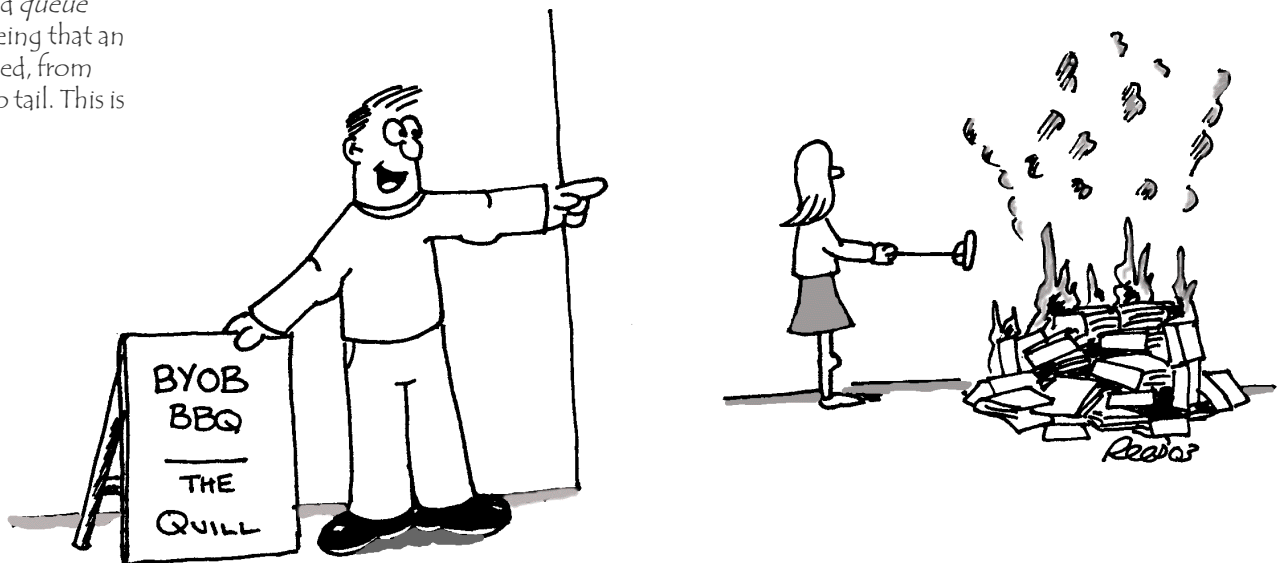
After 20 years in the photography business, Brian decided to make a career change. With a family at home and a job that entailed roughly thirty hours of work per week, Brian made time for the intensive technical writing program. In addition to completing his course with outstanding marks, Brian enjoyed a work placement at Bell Mobility. Shortly after completing the program, he secured a three-month writing contract at EMT Technologies in London. Congratulations Brian!

In the next issue of *The Quill*, scheduled for publication in September, we'll follow up with Brian. Watch for the scoop on what the program did for his career, how he's enjoyed life as a technical writer, and the benefits he's received through his free STC membership.

To find out more about the technical writing program at Fanshawe, or to inquire about hiring a recent graduate, contact Otte Rosenkrantz, Coordinator of General Education and Technical Writing, at orosenkrantz@fanshawec.ca. *

BYOB

by Richard Reed, Comic Strip Artist



YEP IT'S OUR BYOB BBQ..... BRING YOUR OLD BINDERS !!!!!

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STC Sponsors UW in Digital Arts Communication Classroom

by David Goodwin and Deb Maskens

Drive around the University of Waterloo's Ring Road these days and you will be sure to notice something immediately: buildings going up everywhere, and along with them, a feeling of tremendous and positive change. The new William M. Tatham Centre for Co-operative Education and Career Services – located right at the front entrance – has already been completed. Other new centres, such as the Centre for Environmental and Information Technology, are in construction, and many more (like the new Research and Technology Park) are in the planning phase. Inside the physical structures, UW faculty, researchers and students are working to re-invent our future as Canada's most innovative university.

Within the Faculty of Arts, we know first-hand how rapidly innovative digital technologies have changed how we communicate – both in our personal and professional lives. Today we can reach more people, with richer media, and in more interactive ways. To address emerging communications capabilities, we are pleased to announce that, beginning in September 2003, a new Specialization in Digital Arts Communication (DAC) will provide students with the knowledge and skills required to design communication for our increasingly digital world.

Beginning this fall, students enrolling in Arts and Business (formerly Applied Studies) in the Faculty of Arts will design, build, and evaluate innovative digital projects that integrate sound, text, video, and hypertext. Senior courses will require students to deepen their knowledge of digital design theory, put this theory into practice under the supervision of professional designers and researchers, and participate in ongoing research projects. Throughout the program, students will develop digital designs for both the public and private sectors, including designing e-learning and business applications. For this interdisciplinary specialization, students will select four core Digital Arts Communication courses in addition to electives from a variety of departments including: English (Rhetoric and Professional Writing), Fine Arts, Music, and Speech Communication. All students will be enrolled in Waterloo's co-op program and will combine theory with hands-on application in the workplace.

Supporting this drive for innovation, the Faculty of Arts has built a leading-edge e-classroom for this program in the Modern Languages building. Outfitted with smart boards, LCD projectors, and audio and video capture and playback equipment, this classroom provides the perfect space for students to learn the skills – and master the concepts – required to enter the new, digital workplace. In response to our recent call for sponsorship, we are very pleased to report that the Society for Technical Communication (STC) Southwestern Ontario Chapter, has generously donated the funds for a key component of this state-of-the-art classroom: our instructor multimedia podium. Your donation will allow instructors and students to demonstrate and experience the many modes of digital communication in the classroom.



Continued on page 4

Was the first computer 'bug' a real insect?

The story is told that one of the early electromechanical computers suffered a failure because a hapless insect had crawled into the vitals of the machine and been squashed between the contacts of a relay. The incident was written up in the log-book and spread from there throughout the whole of the infant computer industry. The story, delightful as it is, is undoubtedly untrue in the form in which it is often told. The term in fact originates not with computer pioneers, but with engineers of a much earlier generation. The first example cited in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is from the *Pall Mall Gazette* of 11 March 1889:

Mr. Edison, I was informed, had been up the two previous nights discovering 'a bug' in his phonograph – an expression for solving a difficulty, and implying that some imaginary insect has secreted itself inside and is causing all the trouble.

It seems clear from this that the original 'bug', though it was indeed an insect, was in fact imaginary.

Barbeque Word Search

Feed your mind some of these BBQ favourites

by Shannon Hilker, Program Manager

Hot Dog

There are many stories about the origin of the term *hot dog*, most of them false. First, let's start with what we know.

The first known use of the term is in the *Yale Record* of 19 Oct 1895, which contains the sentence:

They contentedly munched hot dogs during the whole service.

Two weeks earlier, that same paper recorded:

*But I delight to bite the dog
When placed inside the bun.*

The *hot* is obvious, but why *dog*? It is a reference to the alleged contents of the sausage. The association of sausages and dog meat goes back quite a bit further. The term *dog* has been used as a synonym for sausage since at least 1884 and citations accusing sausage-makers of using dog meat date to at least 1845. So *hot dog* is simply an extension of the older use of *dog* to mean a sausage.

Perhaps the most persistent false story about the origins of *hot dog* is the one concerning sausage vendor Harry Stevens, cartoonist T.A. "Tad" Dorgan, and the Polo Grounds. According to myth, c. 1900 Stevens was selling the new type of snack at a New York Giants game. Dorgan recorded the event in a cartoon, labeling the sausages "hot dogs" because he didn't know how to spell "frankfurter." Other variants have Stevens naming the delicacy and Dorgan recording it.



- ANTS
- BARBEQUE
- CAKE
- CHEESE
- CHICKEN
- COOKIES
- CRACKERS
- CUTLERY
- FLIES
- GAMES
- HAMBURGERS
- HOTDOGS
- ICECREAM
- JUICE
- LEMONAID
- NAPKINS
- PIES
- POP
- SALAD
- VEGETABLES
- WATERMELON
- WINE

Welcome the New President



Please welcome Heidi Marr as the new president of the chapter. Heidi has been a long-term council member previously serving as Employment Manager for two years and volunteering on various committees. We wish her and the new council success in the coming year. *

STC Sponsors UW Digital Arts...

Continued from page 3

We look forward to showcasing our classroom and the teaching equipment that your donation has made possible. Over the long term, we see many opportunities for our instructors, researchers, and students to partner with the STC through speaking opportunities, professional partnerships and mentoring programs.

On behalf of UW Arts, please accept our sincere appreciation for supporting the Digital Arts Communication program, the new classroom, and – most importantly – the students who will look to us and to you for leadership in this exciting field. *

Introducing Your New Council

2003 - 2004 Volunteers

by Lynda Baxter, Past President

I'm thrilled to present our new council for 2003-2004. After a busy two-year stint as president, Ted Edwins is passing the gavel to Heidi Marr. Thanks, Ted, for your hard work and commitment to our chapter. Heidi will appreciate your ongoing input as Past President (and that means I finally get to join the illustrious group of Past Past Presidents!).

Heidi has a great group of people to work with; those experienced with council service will provide continuity, while our new volunteers will help shake things up. All the best in the coming year!

On behalf of the chapter I'd like to thank those who are retiring from council. Christa Bosse attended council meetings and recorded the proceedings (until diverted by twins!), Leo Petipas made sure we were named and fed at the monthly meetings, Stephen Burke kept our website smart looking and up to date, and Barb Girling faithfully licked stamps and mailed us the Quill every month. Thanks, guys, you made a difference!

You'll notice that there are still some opportunities. The most pressing is that of Program Manager. Shannon Hilker, who has done an outstanding job the past two years, is moving on to the post of webmaster. At this point we have no one to plan and organize the monthly chapter meetings. This involves working together with the Program committee to determine meeting themes, arrange for speakers, and then facilitate the arrangements each month. If you'd like to chart the course for a major part of our chapter's agenda, then this role is for you. Heidi will be really happy to hear from you! And the winners are...

Executive

<i>President</i>	Heidi Marr	<i>Scholarship Manager</i>	Christy Simard
<i>Vice-President</i>	Vacant	<i>Scholarship Committee</i>	Sherry McMenemy
<i>Treasurer</i>	Carol Lawless	<i>Scholarship Committee</i>	Cathy McNair
<i>Secretary/Recorder</i>	Darlene Wood		
<i>Past President</i>	Ted Edwins	<i>Volunteer Manager</i>	Vacant

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<i>Competition Manager</i>	Lori Shantz	<i>Webmaster</i>	Shannon Hilker
<i>Education Manager</i>	Elaine Ruddock	<i>Web Committee</i>	Opal Gamble
<i>Email List Administrator</i>	Paul Kostiuk	<i>Web Committee</i>	Tim Gibbons
<i>Employment Manager</i>	Ursula McCloy	<i>Web Committee</i>	Derek Barnes
<i>Membership Manager</i>	Martin Eberl	<i>CIC SIG Coordinator</i>	Elaine Garnett

<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	Debbie Kerr	<i>Management SIG Coordinator</i>	Vacant
<i>Newsletter Committee</i>	Margie Yundt		
<i>Newsletter Committee</i>	Sue-Anne Schroeder	<i>Online SIG Coordinator</i>	Vacant
<i>Newsletter Committee</i>	Christy Simard		
<i>Newsletter Committee</i>	Andrea Braniff		

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<i>Program Committee</i>	Shannon Hilker	<i>Faculty Liaison: UW</i>	Deb Maskens
<i>Program Committee:</i>	Sherry McMenemy	<i>Faculty Liaison: WLU</i>	David Black
		<i>London Student</i>	
<i>Public Relations Manager</i>	Andrea Braniff	<i>Chapter Liaison:</i>	Catherine Haycock
<i>Public Relations Committee</i>	Vacant	<i>Student Liaison: UW</i>	Lindsay DeClou
		<i>Student Liaison: WLU</i>	Vacant

Unfortunately, the dates don't work. The incident at the Polo Grounds is alleged to have happened after the term was coined. Also no one has found the Dorgan cartoon in question. There is a 1906 Dorgan cartoon featuring hot dogs at a sporting event, but besides being even later, is from a bicycle race at Madison Square Garden, not a baseball game at the Polo Grounds.

The use of *hot dog* to mean skilled or proficient is unrelated to the sausage. In a bit of linguistic coincidence, this usage also appears in the 1890s. It first appears in 1894 in the sense of a well-dressed college student, a clothes horse. This usage is probably a variation on the older expression *putting on the dog* (1871, why *dog* is not known, but there is a well-established slang usage of *dog* meaning flashy or showy from the 1870s). It quickly moved from this sense of *saucy sartorial splendor* to *proficient, accomplished and eventually to its modern association with extreme sports and risky action.*

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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Advertising

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

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(\$30 for 3 or more issues)
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