



# the Quill

the Newsletter for the Southwestern Ontario Chapter STC



SEPT/OCT 2006 (Volume 18 Number 1) [About the Quill](#)

## In This Issue

### President's Message

The chapter year has just begun and already we have a bunch of "firsts" either under our belt or underway. Want to make sure you don't miss out on anything? Let Debbie tell you all about it! ♦

### General Meeting: Employment Progression

Our first chapter meeting of the year was very progressive and informative. And, in case you missed it, we have compiled a list of some of the questions that were asked and the answers our very experienced speakers provided. Read all about it! ♦

### 2006/2007 Technical Communication Competition

Our chapter technical publications and online communication competition is back for 2006/2007! Ruth fills us in on the key benefits, deadlines, and how to enter this year's competition. If you don't have anything to submit, why not sign up as a judge? ♦

### Free Education: The Hunt for a Red-Hot Speaker

Attended an inspiring seminar lately? Want to know more? We need ideas for speakers at our chapter's Education day(s) and if we use your suggestion, you could win the opportunity to attend for FREE. ♦

### Membership Update

Meet our new Membership Manager, Karen Pogue, and find out a little more about how our chapter is growing, and read a few profiles. Maybe they will inspire you to submit one—Karen would love to hear from you! ♦

### Region 5 Conference

The STC Lone Star Community is celebrating its 50th with a conference on the "50 Facets of Technical Communication"—

## The Editor's Message



Welcome to a *fresh* new year for STC Southwestern Ontario chapter. Pull on the wellies and get ready for the harvest.

Wow, hard to believe it is already October, and I have not even figured out what to dress the kids in for Halloween this year. (Last year's **dress as your favourite salad item** was a bit of a challenge. Have you ever tried making a crouton costume? Yeah, don't.)

But I do know we have lots of great things planned for our STC members this year—and there will be lots of opportunities to get to know each other, so come on out, and let us know what you think!

### **Want to be ed-you-mak-ate-ed?**

Well, let us know who you would come out to see for our annual chapter Education event. Your suggestion(s) could win you a FREE seat at the table! [Email Deb with your idea!](#)

### **Got some killer docs?**

Our chapter Technical Communication Competition is back. Want to share some of your blood, sweat, and tears with other members and maybe win a cool award from your peers? [Ruth would love to hear from you!](#)

### **Want to network?**

Come out to our next General meeting, [November 7th](#). Stay tuned for an announcement about the next topic. Our

early registration ends October 13th so don't delay! ♦

## **Students! Call for Posters!**

Head Office wants its student members to put their creativity to work and submit posters for the 54th Annual STC Conference in Minneapolis—if accepted, all posters are displayed and judged right at the conference in May. Don't miss this opportunity to show us what you have got! ♦



### **STC Toronto Website Design Contest**

The STC Toronto chapter wants your help in redesigning their website! Don't know HTML? That's okay—they need a look and feel, so no programming required. [Check it out!](#)

[September meeting](#) was such a success, we are working feverishly to ensure we keep up the momentum—and keep everyone coming out!

### **Hey, why November?**

In case you missed [Debbie's article in The Quill Lite](#), this year we are trying a bi-monthly format for both the newsletter and general meetings.

*Questions? Comments?* Email Margie at [quill@stc-soc.org](mailto:quill@stc-soc.org).



*Creating and supporting a forum for communities of practice in the profession of technical communication*



## About The Quill

by [Margie Yundt](#), The Quill Editor



The Quill is the bi-monthly newsletter of the Southwestern Ontario Chapter STC, which is a Canadian chapter in Region 1. Our chapter spans from Windsor to Mississauga and Georgian Bay to Lake Ontario. This area is home to the technology triangle, which is home to many high-tech industries.

### The Quill History

In October 1989, the first edition of the The Goose was launched by editor Rick Martin, who immediately announced a contest for a new name. The winning entry was, of course, The Quill. Within two years, The Quill earned an Achievement Award for small chapter newsletters, followed by back-to-back Merit Awards in **1993** and **1994**. **1992** and **2001** saw Awards of Excellence. In **1996**, we were awarded not only the Distinguished Award, but the Best of Show for all chapter newsletters. In **2003**, our first year in an online format, we won a Merit Award. In **2004**, we won Most Distinguished, Most Improved, and STC Best of Show.

### Publication Policies and Frequency

The Quill is published bi-monthly, with the exception of January, so there are five issues published from September 2006 to August 2007.

The following is a summary of when articles must be submitted so that they can be included in a particular issue. To help the Quill Editor to plan the content of each issue, contributors are encouraged to submit their story ideas one week before submitting their articles.

Issue	Article Deadline
September/October	September 26
November/December	November 21
February/March	February 20
April/May	April 24
July/August	August 21

### Copyright Statement

This newsletter invites writers to submit articles that they wish to be considered

for publication within the submission deadlines stated earlier. By submitting an article, you implicitly grant a license to the newsletter to run the article and to other STC publications to reprint it without permission. Copyright is held by the writer. When you submit an article, please let the editor know if this article has run elsewhere, and if it has been submitted for consideration to other publications.

When you submit an article, you give the editor and the newsletter staff the right to edit your article for clarity and to ensure that it adheres to the newsletter's style and standards. All articles are edited, copy edited, and proofed prior to publication.

The design and layout of this newsletter are copyright STC, 2004-2005.

## **Reprint Policy**

Articles contained in this newsletter may be reprinted if credit is given to The Quill and the author of the article. You must also submit an electronic copy of the article to The Quill Editor at [quill@stc-soc.org](mailto:quill@stc-soc.org) OR mail two paper copies to the mailing address below.

## **Mailing Address**

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The Quill Editor, 52 Thompson Dr, Guelph, Ontario, Canada N1E 7A2

## **The Quill Staff**

Editor: [Margie Yundt](#)

Copy Editors: Debbie Kerr & Laura Zinn

Technical and Layout Advisor: Opal Gamble

Illustrator: Martin Eisenloeffel

## **Chapter Officers**

President: [Debbie Kerr](#)

Treasurer: [Lori Jankowski](#)

Recorder: [Carol Lawless](#)

For a complete list of contacts, go to the site of the Southwestern Ontario Chapter STC at [www.stc-soc.org](http://www.stc-soc.org).

## STC Head Office

Mission Statement:

*Creating and supporting a forum for communities of practice in the profession of technical communication*

You can find out more about the STC using any of the following methods.

Web site: [www.stc.org](http://www.stc.org).

Address: 901 N. Stuart Street, Suite 904, Arlington, Virginia 222203-1822

Voice: (703) 522-4114

Fax: (703) 522-2075

Email: [stc@stc.org](mailto:stc@stc.org) ♦

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# President's Message: There's a First Time for Everything!



by [Debbie Kerr](#), President

## **First General Meeting**

Let me start by saying that our first general meeting about getting a job was great! It went so well, in fact, that people were asking when the next meeting was. Before they left, they asked to be added to be our email list so they could be sure to attend next time, too. We had people ask how to become an STC member.

Another first for this meeting was that I contacted [Communitech](#) about promoting this event. Elaine Garnet, former CIC-SIG Co-ordinator, and a frequent attendee at Communitech events, mentioned that there was a Career Fair on September 12, in the same room where we were going to have our general meeting. When I contacted Thom at Communitech, he admitted that he didn't know anything about our organization. Before he could distribute the flyers and the email requesting speakers, they would have to be approved. Well, the person who looked at them had heard of us, and "fully endorsed" our group. We printed 150 flyers, and all but 20 were distributed. Thom also sent an email to his Human Resources peer group, which eventually made its way to two of our council members, so it was circulated well. This alone increased the visibility of the entire STC organization and particularly the Southwestern Ontario chapter. That's not bad for a group that is currently looking for a Public Relations Manager!

Thank you Thom for helping to promote this event, and our group. Thank you to all the council members that came together to make this room a success. I think nearly everyone on the council was involved in some way from preparing for the event to promoting the event to participating in the day of the event. My hat goes off to you in all your efforts!



## **First Online Meeting**

Putting this event together was no small task. It required planning. However, the plan to have our council meeting the week before the general meeting fell through. We had to come up with a Plan B, because there were too few people available on our initial planning night. Plan B became an MSN chat session to cover off all the details. I sent out an agenda, and asked everyone to send me

his/her MSN information, and we decided on a time to sign in.

We didn't know how it would go, because it was our first time, but it actually worked out well. It was fun. And the conversation could be captured for bribery purposes later. The meeting probably would have been shorter in person, because we can all talk a lot faster than we can type, but we got everything sorted out in the comfort of our own homes. The only problem for me was letting those typos go and typing in short, incomplete sentences. You could also tell who was used to chatting because they had the emoticons down pat, and were crying on cue, because someone hadn't read the details in the newsletter. Oh, did I give too much away?

Anyway, emoticons aside, it was a good forum for one topic, but we realized that in-person meetings are still required. As it was, it took two hours to sort everything out, and I thought I might never type again. I know we don't have any Worker's Compensation coverage for council members who type too much in an online meeting.



### **First New Special Interest Group (SIG)**

Sometimes, just when you think an article is finished, someone, like Mike Reid, sends you an email and says, I want to start a DITA SIG, and you have another first that you have to mention. In the all the years that I have been a member of the Southwestern Ontario Chapter STC, there has never been a DITA SIG, so it just goes to show you that times and the needs of the chapter change, and we have to change with those needs. For more information about the DITA SIG, contact Mike at [ditasig@stc-soc.org](mailto:ditasig@stc-soc.org).



### **First Time Two SIGs Started Within a Week of Each Other**

Just when I thought my article was complete, I received an email and suddenly the Consulting and Independent Contracting SIG (CIC SIG) had a new leader, Peter Szabo, and we went from not having any active SIGs to two SIGs within one week of each other. Contact Peter at [cicsig@stc-soc.org](mailto:cicsig@stc-soc.org) if you are interested in joining his SIG, or if you have any questions about technical communication from a contractor's perspective.



### **First Competitions of the Year**

We have several firsts when it comes to competitions.

## Technical communication competition this year for the Southwestern Ontario Chapter

The Southwestern Ontario Chapter STC is having its technical publications and online communications competition. STC members and non-members can find out the strengths and weaknesses of their technical documentation ranging from manuals to magazines to newsletters to online help. Our Competition Manager, Ruth Haworth, provides details in [her article](#).

## Education competition

Once Ruth got me in competitive mode with her competition, I got thinking about our education seminars. If we are having the education seminars for our members, then why not let our members decide on who are speaker is this year? Choosing the winning speaker means winning a spot in the seminar. For more information, see [my article](#)!

## Website competition

The Toronto Chapter STC wants to provide you with **"Fun! Fame! And Fortune!"** by giving you the opportunity to redesign their website. Go to [www.stctoronto.org/competition/stcWebDesignContestRules.htm](http://www.stctoronto.org/competition/stcWebDesignContestRules.htm) for contest details.

## Student poster competition

STC Head Office is having a competition of its own that is specifically for student members of STC. It wants to get students involved and part of the inner workings of Head Office. Fifteen selected entrants will make a presentation of their work at next year's STC conference in Minneapolis, where it will be judged. Details are still being finalized. For more information, see [our article](#). ♦

## About Debbie Kerr

*In the 20 years that Debbie has been writing documentation, she has worked in a variety of industries: government, retail, software, and insurance. She is currently employed at The Economical Insurance Group in Waterloo, where she has stepped out of her traditional role of writing user guides and help files, and now writes a variety of specifications.*

*Debbie has been a member of the STC since 1994 and has been a council member for many years. For the second year in a row, Debbie has bravely taken on the role of Chapter President.*

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## General Meeting: Employment Avenues for Technical Communicators



by [Margie Yundt](#), Quill Editor & Webmaster

We kicked off our chapter's 2006/2007 STC year with a general meeting on how to get a job, or transition to a job, as a technical communicator. In light of the topic, we took a more personal approach to this meeting and decided to run it as a progression. This format allowed for eager participants to meet with the speakers they were most interested in, turn the tables, and interview them! Thanks to our wonderful panel of enthusiastic speakers, and some great questions from everyone, the event was a rousing success!



*Our speakers from left to right: Sharon Caverly, Tanya Gillert, Peggy Jarvie, & Kate O'Donnell*

But if you missed this one, don't fret; we have compiled just a few of the questions asked at each of our speaker tables and included them in this article (thanks to Debbie and Pauline for their contributions to this article — *you rock!*). We have also posted resource materials from Tanya on our website (<http://www.stc-soc.org/calendar/2006-09-19.php>). Read on...

**Sharon Caverly - former Human Resources Manager at companies such as Nortel, Switchview, AlliedSignal (now Honeywell) and Spicer Corporation**

**Should you send handwritten thank you cards after an interview?**

While handwritten thank you cards are nice, an emailed thank you is just as nice, and it is the only way that you can guarantee that a person receives it.

**When you go for an interview, and they say that they will get back to you in about two weeks, when should you contact the people who interviewed you?**

Call the company about three days before the two weeks are up.

Be upbeat when you call (smile while you are talking). Try to call first thing in the morning (before 9:00), just before lunch, just after lunch, or just before the end of the day to increase your odds of reaching the person who interviewed you.

When you speak to the person, recap who you are and provide a brief overview of your interview to refresh the person's memory. Provide any information that you forgot to mention during your interview, and ask the person if there is any other information that the person may need to help with the decision process.

**Tanya Gillert - Career Counsellor at University of Waterloo**

**What is the best way to market yourself?**

- Do as much personal branding as you can, and create a professional looking website for yourself. Employers will "Google" you so have something to show them!
- Create your own calling card, which is like a business card. It should have a logo, your name, contact information (but no mailing address) and your website address. [More info](#)
- At a networking event, always wear your name tag on the right side so that people see it as they are shaking your hand.
- Create giveaways such as bookmarks for career fairs, job fairs, and networking events.
- Create a broadcast letter that says what you can do for others. When you send it out, designate a time that you will contact them and then follow through. [More info](#)
- Always try to get a face-to-face meeting with a manager. Be as persistent as you can.

**How do I get started in technical writing as a career?**

- Do research into the field using the Internet and any other resources you can find.
- Do a self-assessment of your skills and working style and compare it to

that of a successful technical writer.

- Target an industry that you have a passion for or that you have worked in.
- Take note of what is important to you and make that your selling point.
- Auction your time at a charity event.
- Network! Word of mouth is powerful, and statistics show that people who network typically have a salary 30% higher than those that don't network.

### **What are some ideas for making my portfolio stand out?**

- Make them look professional.
- Create your portfolio on a CD-ROM, include links to website you have worked on, and show your creativity!
- PowerPoint is also a good tool to show what you have done and can do.
- If you are student, include project work and testimonials.
- Good resource: [KEEPToolkit website](#)

### ***Peggy Jarvie - Executive Director Co-operative Education & Career Services***

#### **What are the advantages of a co-operative education program?**

It's a good way to learn what you don't want to do. It also lets the employers try before they buy. Many employers use it as a recruiting tool.

#### **What are some of the issues facing co-op and other education programs?**

In many cases, we've built up our children's confidence too much so they expect that everything is easy. Academic integrity is not where it should be. To address this issue, U. of W. has formed a special task force.

### ***Kate O'Donnell - Independent Contractor***

#### **What is the best way to get started?**

- Choose two or three agencies and sign up with them. Try and get to a specific agent within the agency that has been recommended by someone else.
- Give some freebies to prospective clients. A little taste of what they can expect from you can lead to a contract.
- Let people know what you do—the power of networking is greater than you think.

- Having prior experience in the industry or in the type of writing needed is a very good thing.

### **What are things you need to be careful of?**

You need to make sure that you deliver on promises. If you're not always available, be up front about this. Make sure you are always respectful of your clients' needs and requirements.

### **What are some of the advantages of being an independent contractor?**

- Your time is almost always well used because the client knows the meter is running for every hour they have you on contract.
- You usually have complete flexibility around what type of work you take on. Many clients are also willing to let you work at home at the hours that work for you. They want results, not time spent.

### **And finally...**

The council would also like to thank [Communitech](#) for its help and support in promoting this event, and [AMI Semiconductor](#) for donating the fabulous door prizes! Congratulations to *Justin Hines* and *Carol Lawless*, our lucky door prize winners! Hope you are enjoying your goodie bags—let us know if you need any help with them. ♦

### **About Margie Yundt**

*Margie is a senior member in our local STC chapter and has been kicking around the Kitchener-Waterloo/Guelph area since...well, forever it seems. She is a technical writer at heart and enjoys mentoring her kids in the Art of English. She lives in Guelph with her family and enjoys a daily commute into Waterloo to join her many co-workers at Research In Motion as a Knowledge Operations Specialist.*



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# 2006/2007 Technical Communication Competition



by [Ruth Haworth](#), Competition Manager

Have you or your company produced technical communications that you think are worthy of awards? Would you like your work to be recognized by your peers? Would you like to have your work critiqued to find out what areas need improvement? These are all reasons why you might want to participate in one or both of the following Society for Technical Communication (STC) competitions:

- Online Communication Competition (with categories like help systems, demonstrations, and technical marketing)
- Technical Publications Competition (with categories like software guides, quick reference guides, and annual reports)

## Who is eligible?

Anyone is eligible to submit entries. You do not have to be a member of the STC. You may enter your own work or the work of a colleague or subordinate.

## What can be entered?

Entries must:

- Contain sufficient technical, scientific, medical, or similar content to qualify as technical communication.
- Have been produced or substantially revised on or after September 1, 2004.
- Have been originally prepared and accepted for publication by a client, employer, or publisher.

## How are the competitions structured and awards given?

The STC's competitions recognize and encourage excellence in online communication and technical publications.

When you submit your work, it will be entered in the Southwestern Ontario regional competition, which is the first level of competition. Entries can win one award—*Distinguished Technical Communication (DTC)*, *Excellence*, or *Merit*.

The International Online Communication Competition (IOCC), and the

International Technical Publications Competition (ITPC)—are the second and final level of competition. Regional entries that receive a Distinguished Technical Communication award are automatically submitted to the appropriate international competition.

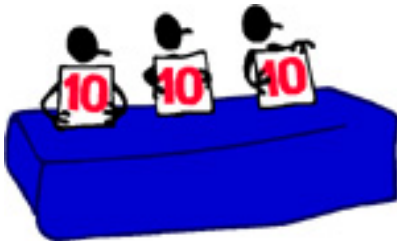
At the international level, a different set of judges reviews the entries and issues awards. At this level, entries can win another award—*Distinguished Technical Communication (DTC), Excellence, or Merit*. Those who win a DTC at the international level for their competition (IOCC or ITPC) may be awarded the *Best of Show* award, because one is awarded in each of the competitions.

## Deadlines, Fees, and Where to Submit

All entries must be received by 5:00 p.m. **November 3, 2006**.

Visit <http://www.stc-soc.org/competitions.php> for entry forms (including all categories of competition), fee structure, and how to submit.

## Call for Judges



Chapter competitions cannot happen without local judges to evaluate the entries. If you are interested in helping to judge this year's entries, please contact Ruth at [competition@stc-soc.org](mailto:competition@stc-soc.org) or complete the [I Want to Judge!](#) form.

## Questions?

For additional entry rules, category descriptions, entry forms, and I Want to Judge! form, please visit <http://www.stc-soc.org/competitions.php>.

If you have any questions about submitting an entry, or being a judge, please contact Ruth at [competition@stc-soc.org](mailto:competition@stc-soc.org). ♦

## About Ruth Haworth

*Ruth Haworth has worked in Canada, England and Africa as a technical writer, journalist, research analyst and administrator. After 25 years away, she returned to her hometown of Waterloo in 1999. She currently enjoys working at Sybase iAnywhere Solutions as a Senior Staff Information Developer and living in a 100-year old primary school in Waterloo.*



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## Free Education: The Hunt for a Red-Hot Speaker

by [Debbie Kerr](#), President

Part of the joy of being a technical communicator is constantly learning new information. We learn new information so that we can explain it, because that is what we do. We also have to learn things to keep ahead in our profession. The question is, "What do we want to learn?"

### The Purpose

Every year, we select speakers that we think you might want to hear. This year, we thought we would try something new. We want you to tell us who you want to be our presenter(s) at this year's education seminars. Maybe you have seen a particular speaker advertised at a conference and thought you'd love to hear that speaker, but not been able to attend that conference. Maybe you have seen someone on the Internet, but not seen a speaking engagement listed anywhere close to you. We want to know the names of those speakers.



We want to know what are hot topics for you. What topics would interest you enough to make a trip to the Cambridge/Kitchener-Waterloo area to attend our seminars? We can only offer you what you want if we know what you want.

### The Process

1. Find that perfect speaker.
2. Write a paragraph about why this is the perfect speaker.
3. Provide the name of the speaker, the speaker's contact information, a website that describes the workshops/seminars that the speaker does.
4. Provide your contact information.
5. Email everything to [education@stc-soc.org](mailto:education@stc-soc.org) by **November 3, 2006**.

The council will then review the entries and decide whether to use one of the

entries as the speaker for the seminar. Topic, availability, and price can all be deciding factors. It's finding the correct combination that makes this so special.

## The Prize

In fact, because this is such a special event, we decided to make this a prize-worthy event. If you send us information that ultimately leads to us selecting your speaker for our education seminars, then we will let you attend the seminars for free. Where more than one person submits the same speaker's name, the person who submits the speaker's name first will be considered the winner. Where one speaker is used for each day, each submitter will receive one free seminar day.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask. Your success is our success. ♦

### **About Debbie Kerr**

*In the 20 years that Debbie has been writing documentation, she has worked in a variety of industries: government, retail, software, and insurance. She is currently employed at The Economical Insurance Group in Waterloo, where she has stepped out of her traditional role of writing user guides and help files, and now writes a variety of specifications.*

*Debbie has been a member of the STC since 1994 and has been a council member for many years. For the second year in a row, Debbie has bravely taken on the role of Chapter President.*

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## Membership News



by [Karen Pogue](#), Membership Manager

Welcome everyone to another season of the Southwestern Ontario STC. As the new Membership Manager, I would like to provide you with some statistical information about our chapter:

- Number of members: 151
- Number of new members (joined in 2006): 27
- Senior members (5+ years): 75

Remember to keep your contact information updated. Just log onto the [STC website](#), then navigate to the STC Members link. From the menu, select **Address Change**, or go to <http://www.stc.org/formAddressChange.asp> to get there directly. You will need your Member ID and password to make these changes, so have these handy.

### Membership Profile

In other news, I would like to profile new and existing members in our Membership Profile section. For this issue, I'll ease everyone into the format and share my profile, along with introducing **Leslie Cook**, a new member to the STC and our chapter—welcome Leslie! If you are inspired, just email your bio to [membership@stc-soc.org](mailto:membership@stc-soc.org).

First, a bit about me:

<b>Member Name:</b>	Karen Pogue
<b>Member Since:</b>	1997
<b>Education:</b>	BA, Wilfrid Laurier University (Economics & Sociology, Math minor)
<b>Number of Years as a Tech Writer:</b>	12
<b>Why did you join the STC?</b>	I decided to join the STC to stay tuned with what was happening in the technical communications field and to learn about other resources and tools that could help me on-the-job.

<p><b>Why do you renew each year?</b></p>	<p>The field is constantly evolving and I feel it's necessary to keep my skills updated. Plus, I like the publications and access to other members.</p>
<p><b>How do you give back to the STC?</b></p>	<p>For the first time, I am taking on the Membership Manager role. I can give back to my local chapter by fulfilling this role, and I get to correspond with new members about what our local chapter has to offer.</p>
<p><b>How can others give back to the STC?</b></p>	<p>There are many ways to give back to the STC as a member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Come to a chapter meeting</li> <li>• Volunteer your knowledge or skills to new members</li> <li>• Write an article or profile about yourself to be featured in the Quill newsletter</li> <li>• Write an article about a topic you are interested in researching and sharing with your fellow STC members</li> <li>• Join the council</li> </ul>
<p><b>Will you continue your involvement in the STC?</b></p>	<p>Absolutely. It's a great way to network and keep in contact with others in your field. It's always nice to chat about a project or tool that someone else can relate to or share their tips and tricks.</p>

And introducing Leslie Cook:

<p><b>Member Name:</b></p>	<p>Leslie A. Cook</p>
<p><b>Member Since:</b></p>	<p>2006</p>
<p><b>Education:</b></p>	<p>Master's in Professional Writing, Kennesaw State University</p>
<p><b>Number of Years as a Tech Writer:</b></p>	<p>1</p>
<p><b>Are you a freelance writer?</b></p>	<p>Yes and no. I have worked as a freelance writer in the past, and the lifestyle really suits me because I have two children. Yet I am now searching for full time work in the hopes that I can take advantage of the security offered by the great technical companies in the Waterloo area.</p>

**What has been your biggest project?**

I was able to pick up a contract position in which I worked on a document called the Voluntary Voting Systems Guidelines. I worked with state and federal election officials to format and edit this two-volume, 300-page document into 150 pages of tight, clean copy. It was a lot of fun to tool around Washington, meet state commissioners and especially to sit in on the Election Assistance Commission meeting where the document was finally adopted as law. Who knew that technical editing could take a person to such places?

**Why did you join the STC?**

I joined the STC in order to learn more about the profession and to make some great connections. The Master's program I attended is a 36-hour multi-tracked program that I was able to tailor to my needs, but I had no idea when I entered the Master's program that I would end up as a technical writer, so there are things that I may have missed. Furthermore, this summer I moved from Georgia to Waterloo, and I've found it difficult to make connections. After only one meeting with the STC, I have found some solid and helpful connections with people who have already helped me on my path.

**How do you give back to the STC?**

For now, I intend to attend the meetings; those speakers need someone to speak to! Also, I hope to join the board so that I can contribute something to the group; I'm sure that one day there will be another "me" who I can help direct!

If you are interested in submitting a profile, please email your bio to [membership@stc-soc.org](mailto:membership@stc-soc.org). ♦

**About Karen Pogue**

*Karen recently joined the IT department at Research In Motion, working as a Knowledge Operations Specialist. In this role, Karen gets to take on many different technical writing and training projects. In her spare time, Karen enjoys family time with her three children and husband.*

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## Region 5 Conference Registration Open!



The Region 5 Conference, sponsored by the **Lone Star Community (LSC)**, is coming to Addison on **November 2 - 4, 2006**. In homage to the Lone Star Community's 50th anniversary, the conference theme is "*50 Facets of Technical Communication*." Sessions are organized into four broad tracks: Usable Tools, Standards of Practice, Learning and Leading, and Global Perspectives. With almost 30 sessions, including four half-day workshops on Saturday afternoon, you will find multiple sessions to interest you.

This year's Region 5 Conference has an exciting program, including the keynote speakers. John Pruitt, User Research Manager for the Mobile & Tailored PC Division at Microsoft and a champion of using personas in technical communication, will give the opening keynote speech entitled Keeping People in Mind: The Creation and Use of Personas. Paula LaRocque will deliver the closing keynote speech, The Secrets of Good Workplace Writing. LaRocque is the former assistant managing editor and writing coach for The Dallas Morning News and can be heard frequently on National Public Radio.

One of the half-day workshops, Public Relations: Getting to the Media and Writing the Release, will be given by local FOX news reporter Jeff Crilley and LSC's own Elisa Miller. The half-day workshops cost \$75 and require a separate registration from the conference.

*Early Registration ends October 13*, so register soon and get the early bird savings!

### **Early Registration**

- Members \$160.00
- Non-members \$180.00
- Students \$110.00

### **Regular Registration**

- Members \$180.00
- Non-members \$200.00
- Students \$125.00

For more information on the conference, go to the conference website at <http://www.region5conf.com/>

If you have any questions, please contact: [PublicRelations@stc-dfw.org](mailto:PublicRelations@stc-dfw.org). ♦

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## Students Members of STC: Call for Posters



**This year at the 54rd Annual Conference of the Society for Technical Communication in Minneapolis, MN, May 13–16, 2007, students will have the chance to submit poster presentations.**

### Conference Theme

#### Share Your Wisdom, Knowledge and Experience

If you've done innovative work in communicating technical content, managing a technical communication group, producing and publishing content, researching content, or promoting the profession, we invite you to submit a poster to the Technical Communication Summit, the 54th Annual Conference of the Society for Technical Communication.

### Format

Poster format will be 3 feet by 5 feet. Posters should follow standard poster formats with easy to read columns, large print, and strategic and interesting use of graphics. You can obtain poster format templates from a number of Internet locations, including <http://www.postersession.com/>.

You will, like all presenters, be responsible for producing your own handouts.

### Criteria and Number

The number of posters will be limited to 15 for this year. Poster proposals submitted will be reviewed by a panel of both academics and practitioners and will be selected on the following criteria:

- **Knowledge:** What you learned and applied in service-learning projects and real-world client projects tied to class work
- **Experiences:** What you learned through internships and working as technical communicators that you were able to reflect on as students
- **Research Results:** Knowledge that you created through usability, survey, interview, and other class and education-related research
- **Best Practices:** Activities associated with publications management, content management, document design, usability testing, or user or audience analysis that put your class experience to work in the real world.

## Deadlines

- **November 1:** Proposal submission
- **December 31:** Notification of acceptance.

## How to Submit

Send a PDF of your poster and the Application form (posted at <http://stc-ac.org/>) to Beth Bailey, the Student Poster Session Coordinator at [ebaileyL@verizon.net](mailto:ebaileyL@verizon.net).



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