

Lines & Letters

Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



February/March 2009 • Volume 25 Issue 5

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President's column: All the season has to offer

By Amy Vogt (avogt@ppipubs.com)

As we move into spring, enjoy all this season has to offer: the warmer temperatures, the first crocuses and daffodils, STC webinars, Professional Development Workshops, and our regular meetings!

Looking to improve your career and make friends?

Soon, we'll be welcoming a new board for NEO STC, transitioning from this year to the next. Our NEO STC year is from July 1st until June 30. Volunteer positions help you to develop skills for personal and career growth — and look great on your resume! You'll make friends and add to your professional network. The schedules and time commitments for committee positions are flexible; many of our members work together remotely. If you are interested in a position on the 2009-2010 NEO STC board, contact Amy Vogt or Denise Kadilak.

Skiing/Snowboarding and Après Ski at Boston Mills — Social Networking Event

It's starting to smell like spring outside and the world seems to have thawed overnight. It's raining today, but I'm wishing that it was still snow. The ski season in this area of the country is a short one.

Before the snow melted, our members shared some time together at our February Social Networking ski and snowboard outing at Boston Mills Ski Resort. The sun was shining and we had a perfect afternoon of après ski on the deck. There were eleven of us over the course of the day and evening. It was a lot of fun for our members who carved some turns on the slopes and those who preferred to "lodge" more than ski or snowboard.

Thanks to our volunteers!

Community achievement award (CAA) support

Thanks to all of the board members who submitted support material for our CAA application this year. Thanks also to our reviewers for all their hard work and feedback: Tricia Spayer, Sherri Henkin, and Denise Kadilak! We submitted the CAA application during the first week of March.

New process for Board meetings

Our Secretary, Renee Murray, developed a new form for our January 29, 2009 board meeting. This new process

allowed for a more efficient, streamlined process for the meeting. Renee compiled all of the responses from committee chairs and distributed them to the group to define the meeting agenda. Thanks, Renee, for all of the hard work on this!

Website work behind the scenes

Thanks to Paul Holland and Candace Wintering on the website committee for all the work on the NEO STC website this year. Paul is a member of NEO STC who has been volunteering remotely from Texas. He has been testing a new website format behind the scenes, so look for some new online features to be released next year.

Members travel from Michigan and Pennsylvania to the February meeting!

I want to thank Tom Glennan and Mark Sakuta for making the long drive to our February meeting at Rockwell Automation. Tom traveled from Detroit, Michigan and Mark drove here from Girard, Pennsylvania!

Tom Glennan also just became one of the newest members of NEO STC! Please help me to welcome him to our chapter!

Our February event was a joint meeting with American Chemical Society, Cleveland Section. David Ball, 2009 chairman of ACS, gave his support to organize this event and make it successful.

Thanks to our sponsors!

Thanks to our sponsors for the February meeting, Rockwell Automation and STAR Group America. Rockwell Automation is a sustaining member of STC and has offered to provide the venue for two of our meetings this year.

We appreciate the continued support of all of our meeting sponsors this year, including: Intuit, Radcom, Rockwell Automation, STAR Group America, Advanced Language Translations, and PPI Technical Communications.

If you would like to support our Scholarship endowment by sponsorship of one of our meetings, contact Bob Young.

Educational Opportunities

Free webinars hosted by Booz Allen Hamilton in March!

Keep the dates of March 18th and March 25th free for webinars hosted by Booz Allen Hamilton.

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- ◆ March 18 — Topic: Providing Effective Editing Comments
- ◆ March 25 — Topic: Mark My Words: How Editors Can Coach Clarity

We are offering these webinars at no cost to our members. Thanks to Sarah Burke for coordinating these events and making them possible. Contact Sarah for more information about these educational opportunities.

Professional Development Workshops

Our next Professional Development Workshops will be in April and May. Watch for details soon about registration for:

- ◆ Topic: Instructional Design
Presenter: Geoff Hart
Date: April 18, 2009
Location: Kent State University
- ◆ Topic: Intuitive images: creating and evaluating usable graphics for international audiences
Presenter: Patrick Hofmann
Date: May 16, 2009
Location: Joseph-Beth Booksellers

Membership Renewal Drive

Our Membership Renewal Drive is going strong thanks to Julie Mason and Sharon Jendrisak on our Membership Committee! Check out the latest progress at stc.org.

If you haven't renewed your membership yet, there's still time! Renew by March 20th to help us to win the Membership Renewal Drive for a second year in a row. Read all the details about the renewal drive and the prizes we could win on stc.org.

News from STC International

Are you headed to the conference in Atlanta?

It's hard to believe that the 56th Technical Communication Summit, STC's International conference is less than eight weeks away. This year's conference will be held from May 3 to May 6 in Atlanta, Georgia. Register now on stc.org.

Let us know if you are planning to attend the conference. We're planning to exchange contact information and organize a NEO STC lunch or dinner while we're in Atlanta. Email Amy Vogt

(avogt@ppipubs.com) if you are planning to go to the conference.

STC Elections start on March 10, 2009

There may not be any Saturday Night Live skits devoted to the candidates, but we have the opportunity to vote for our leadership again in March 2009! Get to know the STC candidates on stc.org and participate in choosing the future of our society.

Have a happy and safe St. Patrick's Day, everyone!

March meeting reminder: Follow up, your secret weapon

Please join the Northeast Ohio STC community for its March 12, 2009 meeting.

During this fun, interactive, and energizing presentation, you will learn about:

- ◆ What to do with all those business cards
- ◆ Why, how, and when to follow up
- ◆ Follow up notes, why they are so effective
- ◆ Why all the those nice manners your parents taught you are so helpful
- ◆ How networking can be productive and fun!

Learn some great stories about chance meetings on a plane, at Baggage Claim, at the gym, and a walk in the park. Because of good follow up, these chance meetings turned into friendships and business opportunities.

Presenter: Wendy Schwarz is a Marketing and Training Consultant in Northeast Ohio. She teaches small businesses, consultants, and job seekers how to market their products, services, and themselves by creating a large network of acquaintances and contacts. She has been in practice since 1990. Known as the "Goddess of Networking®," Ms. Schwarz has given numerous presentations, seminars and workshops helping people to expand their networking, self-marketing, and job search skills. She also provides corporate training in the areas of time and stress management and organizational skills.

- ◆ Date: Thursday, March 12, 2009
- ◆ Location: Mavis Winkle's, Independence, OH

Register: If you plan to attend, please email the Programs Committee by close of business March 9. Or, call Denise at 216-251-0716.

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Upcoming events

NEO STC events

- ◆ 3/12/09: Monthly seminar: Networking "Follow-up — Your secret weapon." See the NEO STC website for more detail.
- ◆ 3/17/09: CANCELLED: NEO STC Social: Green beer at Sullivan's Irish Pub.
- ◆ 3/18/09: Webinar hosted at Booz Allen Hamilton. "Providing Effective Editing Comments," webinar, presented by Michelle Corbin and Paula Cross. Free for NEO STC members. For more information on this webinar, see <http://www.stc.org/2009/02/13/Providing-Effective-Editing-Comments.asp>.
- ◆ 3/18/09: Networking lunch at Eddie's Creekside Restaurant in Brecksville. See NEO STC website for more detail.
- ◆ 3/25/09: Copyediting webinar, "Mark My Words: How Editors Can Coach Clarity." Free, courtesy of Booz Allen Hamilton. See below for more information.
- ◆ 3/26/09: Communication and teamwork workshop. See Free meeting March 26: Building cardboard castles: Communication and teamwork workshop
- ◆ 4/1/09: Deadline for \$1000 NEO STC 2009 scholarship. Applications and information are now posted on <http://www.neostc.org/scholarship/>.
- ◆ 4/9/09: Last day to vote in national STC election. See <https://eballot.votenet.com/stc>
- ◆ 4/16/09: Monthly seminar: Working on virtual teams. See <http://www.neostc.org/calendar/>
- ◆ 4/16/09: Networking lunch at Bravo! Cucina Italiana in Canton. See NEO STC website for more detail.
- ◆ 4/18/09: Seminar: Information Design, presented by Geoff Hart. See <http://www.neostc.org/calendar/20090418.html>

Other events of interest

- ◆ 3/10/09: Cleveland InDesign User Group Meeting, "Designing Forms with Adobe InDesign and Adobe Acrobat Professional," with Pat Lally. 6:00 pm ET, at Cleveland Institute of Art. See <http://www.indesignusergroup.com/chapters/cleveland/events/782/> for detail.

- ◆ 03/17/09: Fundamentals of Technical Writing, Radcom, Inc., 561 Boston Mills Rd., Suite 400, Hudson, OH 44236, By 03/10/09 to nschafer@radcomservices.com or 330-650-4777 ext. 221. See http://radcomservices.com/Services_Training_Offerings.htm
- ◆ 3/17 to 3/20/09: Documentation and Training West 2009 in Palm Springs, CA. See Discounts for STC members on Documentation and Training West 2009 and <http://www.doctrain.com/west/2009>.
- ◆ 03/19/09: Intermediate FrameMaker, Radcom, Inc., 561 Boston Mills Rd., Suite 400, Hudson, OH 44236, By 03/12/09 to nschafer@radcomservices.com or 330-650-4777 ext. 221. See http://radcomservices.com/Services_Training_Offerings.htm
- ◆ 3/25/09: NEOUPA event, "Content strategy: Discipline and value defined." <http://tinyurl.com/d99gob>
- ◆ 3/26/09: UIE Virtual Seminar, "Designing better navigation for web applications," with Hagan Rivers. 1:30 ET. More details at <http://cli.gs/QprX9P>.
- ◆ 3/26/09: Free webinar, "Still don't know what TWI is?" An overview of what training within industry is and why companies are returning to it. Presented by Don Dinero. For more information, see <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/892614009>
- ◆ 3/27 to 3/28: STC-Philadelphia Metro Chapters 2009 Conference, "Visualizing Communication." At Penn State University. See <http://www.stcPMC.org/> for detail.
- ◆ 3/29 to 4/1/09: The Conference for Software User Assistance in Seattle, WA. See <http://www.writersua.com/ohc/index.html>.
- ◆ 04/7/09: Developing Your Facilitation Skills, Radcom, Inc., 561 Boston Mills Rd., Suite 400, Hudson, OH 44236, By 03/31/09 to nschafer@radcomservices.com or 330-650-4777 ext. 221. See http://radcomservices.com/Services_Training_Offerings.htm
- ◆ 04/17/09: Introduction to RoboHelp, Radcom, Inc., 561 Boston Mills Rd., Suite 400, Hudson, OH 44236, By 04/10/09 to nschafer@radcomservices.com or 330-650-4777 ext. 221. See

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http://radcomservices.com/Services_Training_Offerings.htm

- ◆ 04/22/09: Introduction to Captivate, Radcom, Inc., 561 Boston Mills Rd., Suite 400, Hudson, OH 44236, By 04/15/09 to nschafer@radcomservices.com or 330-650-4777 ext. 221. See http://radcomservices.com/Services_Training_Offerings.htm
- ◆ 4/9/09: "Planning topic-based authoring: Working in a use case or scenario-based environment," presented by John Hedtke of JVH Communications. For more information on this free webinar, see <http://madcapsoftware.com/demos/webinars.aspx>.
- ◆ 4/21/09: Last day for Early Bird discount rate for Communication Summit. See STC website
- ◆ 5/3 – 5/6/09: STC's 2009 Technical Communication Summit in Atlanta, GA.

Copyediting webinar hosted by Booz Allen Hamilton

We are pleased to announce that Booz Allen Hamilton has offered to host a half-day copyediting webinar presented by Copyediting newsletter on Wednesday, March 25, 2009!

Topic: Mark My Words: How Editors Can Coach Clarity

In this web-based seminar led by Copyediting editor Wendalyn Nichols, you will learn to shape a writer's copy to remove biased or loaded language, clichés, jargon, and bureaucratese without taking the life out of it or making people sound as if they aren't knowledgeable members of their own profession.

In the first three sessions of the webinar, you will learn principles to follow from plenty of before-and-after examples. The final session will address the question of how to edit tactfully and will offer strategies for coaching writers and establishing protocols where you work so that the copy you edit will (one hopes!) need less work in these areas.

The webinar comprises four consecutive 45-minute sessions with 15-minute breaks between them, for a total of 4 hours. Each session will involve approximately 30 minutes of presentation and 15 minutes of discussion.

Presenter: Wendalyn Nichols

Wendalyn Nichols, the editor of Copyediting newsletter, was a teacher of remedial English, ESL, and composition for 12 years before entering publishing. She began as a freelance researcher, writer, and editor, and then became a lexicographer and editorial manager with the Longman Group in England. For four years, she was the editorial director of Random House Reference and Information Publishing.

Wendalyn has been interviewed about language on The Today Show, CNN, The Joy of Lex (The Discovery Channel) and dozens of radio programs, including Public Radio International's The Next Big Thing and NPR's Talk of the Nation. She was a regular contributor to The Mavens' Word of the Day website, answering questions about word origins and usage. In her career, she has edited a variety of texts, including novels, nonfiction works, scholarly articles, textbooks, dictionaries, children's books, sales materials, corporate communications-and of course, newsletter articles.

- ◆ Date: Wednesday, March 25, 2009
- ◆ Time: 1:00 PM to 5:00 pm; Plan to arrive at the Booz & Co. offices by 12:45 pm.
- ◆ Location: Booz & Company, Cleveland
- ◆ Cost: NEO STC Members: FREE; Non-members: \$10.00

RSVP: To Amy Vogt (avogt@ppipubs.com) if you would like to attend. Include names and email addresses of all attendees.

There is limited space for this webinar. Reservations will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis and must be received by Tuesday, March 24, one day before the webinar.

STC expands resources for unemployed members

Whether laid-off, downsized, let go, or worried about the possibility of such happening, members may find helpful resources for their new job search (or preventing the need for one) on the STC website. Entitled "Resources for members during tough times," and located on the homepage of the website, STC has assembled several articles, webcasts, and pertinent data on where to look. These resources are available to members without charge. Several articles provide information on what strategic changes are necessary for technical communicators during a recession, pitfalls to avoid with

resumes, steps to take in looking for a job, productive use of the STC network of colleagues (chapters and SIGs), and what to do when personal funds evaporate. The site also includes preventive actions members should take to increase their value to their company.

Two free webcasts of previously live web seminars on resume effectiveness and search tactics are able to be downloaded. The seminars were recently presented by John Hedtke and Jack Molisani to capacity crowds and repeated.

EXCLUSIVE: STC members see new job postings 14 days before nonmembers on STC's online Career Center. That can be a huge advantage!

Congratulations to DocTrain West winners!

Robert Dianetti and Jean Church won free admission to DocTrain West. Documentation and Training West 2009 will be held in Palm Springs, CA. Discounts are available for STC members. See Discounts for STC members on Documentation and Training West 2009 and <http://www.doctrain.com/west/2009>.

Join NEO STC on LinkedIn

Our chapter now has a group on LinkedIn named Northeast Ohio STC Community.

Join us on <http://www.Linkedin.com> (you must be a member of LinkedIn, which is free for a basic membership). To join the group:

1. In the left navigation, click **Groups** or **User Groups**.
2. In Group Directories box on the right, click **Find a Group**.
3. In Search Groups, enter **Northeast Ohio STC Community**.
4. Click **Search**.
5. Select **Join this group** (under the group description).
6. Follow the instructions. There will be waiting period while your membership is approved.

Anyone for lunch?

About a dozen people from several area companies enjoyed the NEO STC lunch on Friday, February 20, at the Fox and Hound restaurant in Mayfield. If you have

thought of attending an NEO STC lunch and never have, you should consider coming to one in the future.

Wednesday, March 18, we have a lunch scheduled for Eddie's Creekside in Brecksville. Thursday, April 15, the location is Bravo! Cucina Italiana in Canton. Looking out into May and June, we have events scheduled for Cheesecake Factory at Crocker Park and Claddaugh Irish Pub at Legacy.

Angie Dianetti and Jill McCauslin are coordinators for the networking lunches. According to Jill, "The lunches move around geographically to allow as many different people to attend as possible. The intent of the lunches is to be an informal get together. Discussions may range from the technical to the professional to the personal. It depends on who is attending and what people are interested in discussing. We schedule the lunches six months in advance. If anyone has a recommendation for a restaurant, please let us know. We're always happy to have suggestions. We order off the menu and have separate checks. You pay only for what you eat."

Free meeting March 26: Building cardboard castles: Communication and teamwork workshop

NEO STC President Amy Vogt and Immediate Past President Tricia Spayer offer a preview of the workshop they will present during this year's Technical Communication Summit in Atlanta.

Overview

Communication is one of the most important skills to foster in today's workplace and as a volunteer with your STC chapter or SIG. It is an essential part of the success of the entire group. This workshop will work on exploring the ways we communicate and work with each other through a fun, team exercise.

Learning objectives

When there is less communication, what happens to the team? What happens to the success of the project? This workshop will explore this question and give insight into each participant's personal way of communicating and working as a team member.

Explore conflict management in a team situation.

Application of communication skills to leadership roles in STC and employment in the field of technical communication.

Topic relevance

Through our involvement with STC or in everyday work situations, we need to communicate constantly with each other to be successful. Often, in business, one hears that a project did not go as planned because of a “communication issue” or a deadline was missed due to a “lack of communication.” There is no question that communication is important, but when there is less communication, what happens to the team? What happens to the success of the project? This workshop will explore this question and give insight into each participant’s personal way of communicating and working as a team member and explore conflict management in a team situation. These skills can be applied to the teams we work with as STC volunteers or our colleagues and clients in the workplace.

We will provide:

- ◆ the materials required to make a 3-D structure in small groups
- ◆ handouts

Presenters

Amy Vogt is serving as President of the Northeast Ohio Chapter of STC. She is a graduate of Kenyon College. Amy works at PPI Technical Communications, a division of Advancement LLC, as the Quality Assurance Manager. She also supports project management at PPI, where she handles translation coordination and special projects. She has been with PPI for over 16 years. Before deciding on the field of technical communication, Amy prepared and gave similar presentations as part of an Art Therapy graduate program at Ursuline College.

Tricia Spayer is the Immediate Past President of the Northeast Ohio Chapter of STC. She has been a technical writer/illustrator at Pressco Technology Inc. for over 12 1/2 years. During this time, she has created award-winning technical documentation, designed and managed a corporate website, and created trade show graphics and marketing brochures. All of these efforts required multi-disciplinary teamwork with all levels of associates up to and including the CEO. Currently, she is administrating and instructing teams from multiple departments in a content management, collaborative authoring environment.

- ◆ Date: Thursday, March 26, 2009
- ◆ Location: Maple Heights Library

Register: If you plan to attend, please email the Programs Committee by close of business March 24.

Professional Development Workshop: Information Design

Please join the Northeast Ohio STC community for its April 18th, 2009 professional development workshop featuring Geoff Hart.

Information design provides important insights into our audiences and how they understand text and images. This understanding reveals powerful ways to combine words and graphics so that they communicate both efficiently and effectively. In this introductory workshop, you will learn the basic concepts of how people read, view, and use the information we create — and through hands-on exercises, you will see how you can put that theory to work in your own projects.

Geoff Hart is an STC Fellow with more than 20 years of experience as a writer, editor, information designer, and French translator. He has published more than 300 articles, most available through his website (<http://www.geoff-hart.com>), as well as the book *Effective Onscreen Editing*. A popular speaker at the STC annual conference and STC chapter meetings, Geoff has given presentations and workshops on topics ranging from writing and editing to information design, cross-cultural communication, and workplace survival skills. He currently works as a freelance French translator and scientific editor, specializing in authors for whom English is a second language.

- ◆ Date: Saturday, April 18, 2009
- ◆ Time: 8 am to 4 pm
- ◆ Location: Kent State University

Register: If you plan to attend, please email the Programs Committee by COB April 10th. Or, call Denise at 216-251-0716.

Cancellation Policy: All cancellations and refund requests must be made by email or phone by April 13, 2009. Contact Amy Vogt (440-498-8529) or Denise Kadilak (216-251-0716) to cancel. A \$15.00 cancellation fee will apply. Absolutely NO REFUNDS will be made after midnight, April 13, 2009. No-shows will NOT be refunded.

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Congratulations to Stephanie Webster!

Stephanie was awarded the Distinctive Chapter Service Award (DCSA) this year.

The citation reads:

For your continued dedication to the Northeast Ohio chapter and to STC, for your many years of leadership on the NEO STC board, and for your commitment to the Crucial Communicator conference.

Congratulations, Stephanie, and thank you for everything you have done for our community!

New Associate Fellow profile: Bob Dianetti

By Tricia Spayer (tspayer@yahoo.com)

NEO STC is proud to have Bob Dianetti as a long-time active member. Bob has been in the technical communication field for over 22 years and a member of STC for over 17 years.

Bob has served the NEO STC community in many roles, including Vice President, President and Immediate Past President. Recently, Bob finished a three year term as STC Director. During his time as Director, he chaired the Bylaws Committee, and managed a Governance Area. He is currently on the programs committee for the 2009 Technical Communication Summit. In 2002, Bob received the Distinguished Chapter Service Award for his service to our community. Bob also earned a Volunteer of the Year Award and a Special Recognition award from NEO STC in recognition of his service.

Bob started Radcom, a technical communications and custom training development consulting firm in 1996. Radcom has consistently employed 10-20 technical communicators over most of the past 12 years. Radcom also consistently sponsors and supports local STC events. Radcom has won numerous business success story awards from the Akron Business Conference and the Case Western Reserve Weatherhead School of Management. Bob has been a member of and served on the boards of nine local business organizations.

Prior to his work at Radcom, Bob earned degrees in Electrical Engineering/ Industrial Distribution, Technical Writing, and attended an Executive MBA program. Bob has worked as a Technical Writer, a Technical Communications consultant, and an Instructional Design consultant.

Bob has spoken at numerous NEO STC meetings as well as other STC chapters and at several regional STC conferences.

In his "spare time," Bob developed a team to support the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Light The Night® Walk. Their team, Radcom's Mighty Mikey's Marchers, consistently raises money for this cause. In May of 2006, Bob walked the Rite Aid Cleveland Half-marathon while raising money for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Team In Training®. Overall, Bob has raised over \$30,000 total for LLS.

Please join us in congratulating Bob on successfully achieving the Associate Fellow status.

New Associate Fellow profile: Jill McCauslin

By Jeanette Evans

NEO STC owes Jill McCauslin a huge debt of gratitude for her many years of service to our chapter. Partly in recognition of this service, STC recently named Jill an Associate Fellow.

On the NEO STC level, Jill won a Distinguished Chapter Service Award in 2003 and was chapter president in 2001-2002. In 2004, she received a Continued Service Award for developing and executing networking lunches. For the 2005-2006 term, she worked on the NEO STC membership committee and helped organize a highly successful membership drive. Since 2006, she has been active at the NEO STC level with programs such as networking lunches.

Her other involvement in STC includes speaking at annual conferences and chapter meetings. She also helped organize three Technicoms, two of which also counted as regional conferences.

As Vice President/Human Resources and co-owner of Radcom Inc., Jill's company provides training and documentation services and is an outstanding supporter of STC and NEO STC.

Radcom also constantly renews their national certification as a Women Owned Business by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) in partnership with the WBENC - Southeast. The WBENC certification for women-owned businesses is one of the most widely recognized and respected certifications in the nation and is accepted by over 700 major corporations across the country.

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A member of Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) and National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO), Jill also belongs to the Knowledgeable Network of Women, a program associated with the Greater Akron Chamber.

She was also on the scholarship committee at the Hudson Chamber of Commerce and was a judge for the first scholarship for NEO STC in 2008.

Prior to joining Radcom, Jill worked at several small software companies in northeast Ohio as a technical writer and general support person. She also worked at Predicasts in University Circle for 5 years and was the coordinator between development and operations and wrote documentation.

Jill currently lives in Hudson with her husband, Dave, their son, Nick, two dogs, and two cats.

Please join us in congratulating Jill on successfully achieving the Associate Fellow status.

April 1 scholarship deadline

By Jeanette Evans and Sarah Burke, Academic Relations Committee Co-Chairs

Don't let the deadline fool you — NEO STC wants to hear from Ohio's brightest technical communication students. Our community is accepting applications for a \$1,000 scholarship until April 1, 2009. For details, see neostc.org/scholarship.

NEO STC is offering a \$1,000 scholarship to one deserving Ohio undergraduate, graduate, or community college student studying a technical or scientific communication-related field. This scholarship is designed to encourage local academic excellence, provide the profession with educated communicators, and promote greater awareness of and participation in STC. Applicants will be evaluated based on their potential to contribute to the profession.

NEO STC plans to notify the winner by May 1 and will recognize the recipient at our May meeting.

Meeting review: February 18's joint meeting with the American Chemical Society

By Tess Weaver

After a tasty meal and noteworthy conversation with members of the American Chemical Society, the joint meeting was kicked off by Amy Vogt, President NEO

STC, and Dr. David Ball, Chair of the Cleveland Section ACS.

After opening introductions and the announcement of fabulous door prizes, the evening's speaker, Lisa Adair, Editor, Rockwell Automation, took the floor. During her presentation, Adair provided information about measurable attributes of the editing process, the value of collecting such metrics, and examples of metrics collected at Rockwell Automation.

Adair discussed the recent implementation of Microsoft SharePoint to collect and archive editing metrics at Rockwell Automation. She provided a brief demonstration of how editing metrics are entered and tracked using the tool.

Adair's engaging presentation was intently listened to by an audience of 54 attendees. "It's one of the largest meetings since the 2008 – 2009 year started in September," says Programs Co-Chair Paulette Henning.

The presentation came to an end after Adair fielded a few questions from the audience. The questions asked indicated a plethora of thought-provoking presentation content and an audience that was actively engaged with the subject matter.

The meeting was closed by Vogt and Ball with the drawing of door prize winners and closing statements. The winner of the truffles was envied by all.

Book review: *Alphabet juice*

By Jeanette Evans (jeanette.evans@sbcglobal.net), Associate Fellow

Book information: *Alphabet Juice: The Energies, Gists, and Spirits of Letters, Words, and Combinations Thereof; Their Roots, Bones, Innards, Piths, Pips, and Secret Parts, ... With Examples of Their Usage Foul and Savory* (Hardcover), by Roy Blount Jr. List price \$25 (available new from amazon.com from \$14.77). 384 pages. Published by Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, New York. Published October, 2008.

Author Roy Blount is a regular panelist on NPR's Wait, Wait ... Don't Tell Me! He is also a member of the American Heritage Dictionary Usage Panel. In addition, he was a staff writer for Sports Illustrated and contributed to publications such as The New Yorker. He is also author of over 20 previous books, covering subjects from the Pittsburgh Steelers to Robert E. Lee.

With 13 customer reviews when I last checked on Amazon, 7 reviewers gave this book the highest 5-star

rating. The 6 remaining reviewers gave the book equal numbers of 4-, 3-, and 2-star ratings. I give it a 4. It is probably not going to be one of my all-time favorite books on language. But, it is a fun and interesting read.

The book is arranged in alphabetical order with Blount giving comments on words that he finds worthy of thought. It is the type of book I would like to have written in many ways, as words sometimes strike me as interesting, worthy of commentary, and funny.

As an example, Blount includes in the book the word "e-mail." By the way, part of what I like about Blount is that in many cases he observes and does not pass judgment on what is right and wrong. He says he does not feel qualified to pass judgment. I can identify with that. I don't feel qualified to even write this review. But, if I don't do it, I'm afraid that no one will. And, that would be wrong.

In the entry for e-mail, Blount discusses placing a hyphen in words like A-bomb or C-section, but not email. Advocates of email without the hyphen, argue that it conserves space. This, according to Blount, is the kind of topic and word worthy of commentary that is often humorous, light, and thoughtful.

Blount also comments on letters. He has a lot to say about letters as well as words. About the letter Q, Blount considers the capital letter to be an "upside-down apple, but much depends on type-face." He compares the q in Braggadocio, Goudy Old Style, American Typewriter, and Onyx, among others, and has often hilarious commentary.

"If Ramirez stayed in Cleveland, the Indians may not be seven victories shy of their first World Series title since 1948." What Blount says about this sentence from *USA Today* is amusing. The sentence is a good example of language use worthy of commentary.

Do we really need or want another book about language and usage? I suppose that since language is endlessly changing, there will always be something new to write about, especially when it comes to English, which you could argue is a huge collection point for words, constantly assimilating words and ideas from various cultures, fueled by the immigrant history of America and America's constant acceptance of new words and I think at its best America's openness to new ideas and reinvention. Now that was a rambling thought and rambling sentence. The book is making me think these kinds of thoughts and ideas.

Webinar review: How to position yourself as a manager and add value to your organization

Notes on a Webinar with Joel Kline

By Rebecca Martin (rrminhud@alltel.net)

Business consultant and Assistant Professor of Business and Digital Communications Joel Kline (JoelKline.com) has valuable insight on the role of the technical communicator as manager. At a February webinar, he shared strategies to help technical communicators position themselves as managers within a business organization.

Kline believes technical communicators have neglected to promote their skill set as *management skills* within the enterprise. To acquire status and budgets comparable to other departments, we must position the role of the technical communicator as a management function. We also have to overcome the view of upper management that technical communication is a cost center and that technical communicators are not managers unless they manage people, says Kline. To be acknowledged as managers, technical communicators need to build a business case for being included in management discussions and planning. To do this, we have to identify how we bring value to the enterprise and communicate that to our fellow managers.

Customarily, a manager has been defined as someone who manages people. More recently, managers in IT departments have expanded that definition to include someone who manages information, and may, or may not, manage people. This evolution of the manager's role opens the door for technical communicators to position themselves as managers in a variety of settings.

What do we as technical communicators manage? To begin with, we are already managing projects, knowledge, content, and graphics. We can use those same skills to broaden our exposure in the organization. For instance, one's expertise in Primavera or MS Project might be useful to other persons in the organization. We can actively seek out projects that allow us to demonstrate our expertise while working with other managers.

Kline proposes six managerial functions the technical communicator can appropriate:

- ◆ Training Manager
- ◆ Content Manager

- ◆ Knowledge Manager
- ◆ Manager of Collaboration
- ◆ Manager of Users
- ◆ Manager of Business Technology

In essence, Kline is telling us to play to our strengths. Use the knowledge and skills we already have to assist others and collaborate with them across disciplines and departments in our organization.

Training Manager

The training manager and content manager are the most obvious roles for the technical communicator as we are already filling either one or both of those roles. We simply need to define the role as a management role to others in the organization. If you are a training developer, Kline suggests making contact with the HR, Training and Development, or IT departments. Offer to build training curriculums and demonstrate how training can make employees more productive.

Content Manager

To position yourself as a Content Manager, connect with the PR, communications, marketing, or legal departments. Again, use what you know. Sell yourself as the expert on content management. Propose solutions for cataloging, searching and storing content throughout the enterprise. Demonstrate how consistent communication can reduce redundancy and save costs. Start by organizing a committee to do a communications audit. Determine what information the company disseminates and how. Promote yourself as the manager of all published content. (Be sure to include Web content.)

Knowledge Manager

A less obvious role might be that of Knowledge Manager. Knowledge management involves identifying and adopting the insights and experiences of people in all areas of an enterprise. It can include published documents and internal training programs, as well as tacit knowledge, or what's inside people's heads. In practical application, knowledge management can reduce training time for new employees, avoid redundant work, and retain knowledge despite employee turnover. (Knowledge Management (2009). In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/Knowledge_management)

Knowledge management involves indentifying key knowledge and knowledge holders throughout the

organization and developing ways to share knowledge across departments. A first effort as a knowledge manager might involve building a tacit knowledge bank. This can be done through interviews, collecting unpublished papers, or videotaping certain tasks.

Collaboration Manager

The technical communicator might also take on the role of Collaboration Manager, sharing with other managers his or her knowledge of team building and collaborative tools such as blogs. A Collaboration Manager might also act as a Community of Practice coordinator.

Manager of Users

Another natural role for the technical communicator is Manager of Users. In this role, the technical communicator uses her or his knowledge of inexpensive research methods (focus groups, usability tests, surveys) to manage information about internal and external users and demonstrate to other departments, such as Marketing, IT, and Operations how this information can add value to the organization and improve customer relations.

Manager of Business Technology

As a Manager of Business Technology, the technical communicator can use her or his understanding of technology and business operations to be a bridge between IT and Operations. Kline suggests that the technical communicator "build a culture of translation," translating the needs of Operations into documents that IT can act upon.

Summary

How do we make ourselves into managers? We start by thinking strategically, says Kline.

To position ourselves as managers, we have to think like managers. We can do this by:

- ◆ Understanding the company's business model and learning to think strategically.
- ◆ Ask how decisions impact the customer.
- ◆ Ask, "how can my work differentiate our company and product and give it a competitive advantage?"
- ◆ Assess what you manage and communicate it up the ladder.
- ◆ Assess what you would like to manage.
- ◆ Broadcast the fact that technical communication is a profit center.

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- ◆ Start to think strategically, not tactically.

What does it mean to think strategically?

- ◆ Learn to recognize and accommodate trends in the industry.
- ◆ Look for ways to maximize profit/minimize cost.
- ◆ Consider the impact of your work on other departments.
- ◆ Learn to be proactive instead of reactive.

My main take-away

IT thinking is more flexible than other departments in its view of the management role. For example, they are more likely to think of management encompassing nonliving things such as networks, servers, and databases. A technical communicator working in the IT environment should have an easier job of persuading IT managers to view the technical communicator role as a manager position.

How I would rate the presentation

I found the material to be well-organized, and the delivery was straightforward. I got a lot more out of this than I anticipated. If you get the chance, I would definitely recommend taking a seminar with Kline.

See also

For more detailed descriptions and tactics for any of the six management roles discussed above, see the [handout](#).

Joel Kline kindly agreed to allow us to distribute his PowerPoint slides from the seminar. You can view a PDF of the slide deck [here](#).

Future webinars

If you are interested in hosting a webinar, contact Amy Vogt at avogt@ppipubs.com.

The Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest: To be read at the March 12 meeting

"It was a dark and stormy night; the rain fell in torrents — except at occasional intervals, when it was checked by a violent gust of wind which swept up the streets (for it is in London that our scene lies), rattling along the housetops, and fiercely agitating the scanty flame of the lamps that struggled against the darkness." — Edward George Bulwer-Lytton, *Paul Clifford* (1830)

In 1982, Prof. Scott Rice in the English Dept. at San Jose State University started the Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest. The challenge: **write an opening sentence** to rival Edward George Bulwer-Lytton's infamous opening sentence to his novel, *Paul Clifford*, which is reproduced here.

We want YOU, dear reader, to take up this challenge, write your own opening sentence, and bring it to our March 12th meeting. Read your entry aloud during dinner at the meeting and be in the running for a new *Webster's Thesaurus* from your peers at the NEO STC. You'll still have plenty of time to submit your entries yourself to the official contest by April 15th, a very ominous date indeed!

For examples and more information, visit the website at <http://www.bulwer-lytton.com>

Request for Northeast Ohio trivia

The Atlanta STC chapter is hosting a Community Reception at the STC Summit in Atlanta. We will have a game to help people mix and mingle that revolves around answering questions about STC geographic locales. Could you send some geographical trivia about your city or region to berniehunter@comcast.net that we could include in our game?

Tips:

- ◆ The question should indicate the city or region (this will get people looking for someone from that area to help answer the question).
- ◆ The answer should be something that someone from your chapter would know.

Examples:

- ◆ If you were to eat at the Big Chicken in Atlanta, what restaurant would you be at?
- ◆ Whose statue sits atop the city hall in Philadelphia?

Consensus on Competitions judging: Success!

By Kristen Jackson and Sherri Henkin

After a competitions hiatus during 2007-2008, NEO STC held technical publications competitions for the 2008-2009 year. And, as with most competitions, judges are involved.

The Competitions Committee Co-Chairs (Sherri Henkin, Kristen Jackson, and Lori Neuman), solicited judges

through direct contact, Constant Contact, and announcements at NEO STC meetings and events. We opted to use the consensus (collaborative) judging model for the 2008-2009 competitions.

Judges were divided into groups to meet and evaluate 36 entries from Atlanta. Each group of judges met physically or virtually and rated their groups of entries. At the close of the two-week judging period, all groups of judges reconvened for the consensus meeting at Rockwell Automation. Each group presented the results for their assigned entries, and then nominated Distinguished award winners they felt deserved consideration for Best of Show. Despite this voluminous number of entries and short timeframe, the judges rose to the occasion and provided clear and thoughtful comments and recommendations for all of their assigned entries.

While the task was a challenge, most judges who responded to a post-event survey liked judging another chapter's entries, and felt that they had enough time to thoroughly complete the judging process for their assignments. In addition, judges were very happy with the consensus judging process. As one judge stated, "The experience was extremely positive! It was nice to work with such a professional group of people."

Interested in judging? Contact either Sherri Henkin at sleah47@juno.com or Lori Neuman at lneuman@ra.rockwell.com for details on how to get involved!

Handy hint: Change default font in Microsoft Word 2007

By Lisa Mileusnich (lmileusnich@parker.com)

My team recently switched from Microsoft Office 2003 to Office 2007, and the first thing we noticed about Word (other than the Ribbon) was that the default font is 11 point Calibri. Our standard style is 10 point Arial. Changing the default font was not a difficult task, but the steps are different from how you would do them in Word 2003.

To change your default font for Word 2007 documents:

1. Click the **Home** tab on the Ribbon, if you are not already on it.
2. Click the **Styles** group button to open the Styles pane.

3. Click the **Manage Styles** button at the bottom of the Styles pane. (It is the farthest button on the right.)
4. In the Manage Styles dialog box, click the **Set Defaults** tab.
5. Select the font options you want to use as your default.
6. Select **New Documents Based On This Template**, at the bottom of the dialog box.
7. Click **OK**.

Your default font is now updated to your standard for all new documents you will create in Word 2007.

Of interest

Survey results

2008 WritersUA Skills and Technologies Survey results: <http://www.writersua.com/surveys/tools09/index.html>

Intellectual property web presentation

Web presentation on "Intellectual property for entrepreneurial authors": <http://xiosoftpresenter.com/?eventid=5788029>. Presented by Kevin Houchin.

Defining a body of knowledge

By Hillary Hart, STC Director at Large, Candidate for 2009 2nd Vice-President; hart@mail.utexas.edu; http://www.cae.utexas.edu/prof/hart/

STC has meant a lot to my professional growth over the past 20+ years as a teacher and practitioner of technical communication, and I want to help STC expand its educational mission for all technical communicators.

It is time our profession had a defined body of knowledge. Why?

1. Technical communication cannot be a profession without a defined body of knowledge (BOK).
2. We cannot define our value, to business and to society, without a BOK.

The data I and others have collected show that communicators seem to be spending about the same amount of time on communication processes as they are on creating end-user documents or products. If we want to maximize our value to the business functions of corporations and agencies, we need a body of knowledge that will make that value clear to employers.

The BOK task force that I co-chair with Mark Hanigan is working hard to develop a Knowledge Portal that will make accessible, in one easy-to-navigate web-based portal, the body of technical-communication knowledge that has evolved over time.

The Knowledge Portal will fill these critical needs:

- ◆ New practitioners need to see their professional development pathways spelled out, along with concomitant educational/training opportunities.
- ◆ Veteran practitioners need a means for assessing their progress and determining what additional training they may need.
- ◆ Academic and training professionals need a source of assessment criteria for their programs.
- ◆ Executives, who may never have heard of technical communication, need a place to find out what technical communicators can do for their companies.

For me, the most amazing aspect of the BOK project has been seeing how productively STC members collaborate over time and distance. The BOK "map" of domains and skills received hundreds of helpful suggestions last June at the Summit in Philadelphia. And last September, when the proposed site map for this portal was posted on the STC website, over 150 STC members from all over the globe provided comments. Now we are populating the map nodes with content and will showcase our progress at the upcoming Summit in Atlanta, where we hope to gain more contributors.

Such collective knowledge making is powerful indeed — imagine all 13,000 STC members worldwide contributing their piece of the knowledge puzzle.

With job layoffs, cutbacks in institutional budgets, and disappearance of companies, the one constant that cannot be reduced is your knowledge — knowledge of how to do many things in addition to writing clear documentation.

- ◆ Knowledge of what it takes to create, manage distribute, and archive information in specific media for specific users.
- ◆ Knowledge of the processes that enhance business development because they enhance internal as well as external communication.
- ◆ Knowledge of the social, cultural, and even health impacts of the technologies being marketed under the name of progress.

- ◆ Knowledge of how to help people use technologies safely and wisely.

Your knowledge is your power, in any economic climate. Stay tuned for BOK updates.

STC election information

STC's 2009 election will open in early March. Personal messages from candidates are listed below (note that these are not inclusive; only candidates who sent us articles specifically for the newsletter are included). In addition, STC has posted brief biographies about each candidate at <http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/index.asp>. Members can use the "Ask a question" feature on the website to submit questions directly to the candidates.

Hillary Hart announces her candidacy for 2nd vice-president, Society for Technical Communication

I am a candidate for STC 2nd vice-president in the upcoming election (voting starts March 9, 2009). Here is why I am running.

As an active participant in STC at the local and international level for 21 years, and currently as Director-at-large, I can see that STC has made some great strides in the past couple of years:

- ◆ extending its global reach and mission through a stronger presence in several international standards groups such as OASIS, W3C, and ISO
- ◆ providing more services to member communities, including the Leadership Community Resource to help communities train new community leaders
- ◆ advancing the profession by sponsoring the industry-academic partnership that is defining a body of knowledge for technical communication
- ◆ developing a new section of stc.org with concrete examples of the value of technical communication

STC is now a more transparent organization that has learned to evaluate its programs and goals through strategic planning and processes such as the Strategic Program Analysis. On the other hand, STC must continue to evolve ... and do so rapidly. The Society must adjust services and processes quickly to keep pace with international economic and technological developments while at the same time maintaining a long-range vision of the value of technical communication. And STC is still not as relevant to all

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technical communicators, particularly younger ones, as it should be.

I would work to enact these specific improvements to STC's benefit to members and the profession:

1. Continue to provide services to members who cannot rejoin because they are unemployed.
2. Increase the number of free or low-fee webinars geared to professional development.
3. Target even more resources to the Body of Knowledge Portal project to give members the knowledge they need to retune or refit their skills for changing economic and business conditions.
4. Plan a Summit to be held outside the United States.
5. Target more services and information to technical communicators under forty. They are the future of the profession.

As an educational association, STC can best serve its membership by providing access to knowledge and by educating the public and employers about what technical communicators really do. As an educator, I know something about reaching out to diverse audiences on a daily basis. And as co-chair of the STC Body of Knowledge (BOK) task force, I am working with a terrific team of academic and industry professionals to build a web-based portal that will make accessible the body of technical-communication knowledge.

Knowledge is power. With job layoffs, cutbacks in institutional budgets, and disappearance of companies, the one constant that cannot be reduced is our individual and collective knowledge.

Help me empower our membership. Thanks so very much for your support.

Hillary Hart, Candidate for 2009 2nd Vice-President, STC; hart@mail.utexas.edu;
<http://www.cae.utexas.edu/prof/hart/>; 512-471-4635

W.C. Wiese: Candidate for Second Vice President of STC

For the past 4 years, I've had the privilege of serving as STC treasurer. During this dynamic time of transition, we've invested in skilled professional management but now face the harsh realities of a poor economy.

Meeting 5 challenges will determine whether STC will accomplish its strategic goals for the profession. STC

must succeed at Relevance, Replenishment, Recognition, Resources, and Relationships and Combinations.

1. Relevance

Ask yourself: can you afford not to be a member of STC?

The test of a professional society is how often you rely on it. An essential professional resource has a website you visit everyday, archives that provide rich on-demand information, publications that compel you to read something in every issue, networks that expand your thinking and respond with answers, and resources for future growth. It increases your value in the marketplace. And it is always steering you toward knowledge and opportunities. It becomes an Every Day Professional Resource. I want an STC that does these things.

Since 2006, the Board and Office have made great strides to increase STC's professional value. A skilled staff has improved our education programs, publications, and society operations. We still need to improve how our members interact, mentor, and support each other. We need to continue improvements in the Annual Summit and bring you into regular contact with new standards, our role in guiding them, and the outcomes we'd like to see.

We need to elevate our members in the employment marketplace by identifying the trends, technologies, and education that will increase your value. We need to prove our case, and that means spending STC's research dollars with respected economists who can measure the value we add to products. We need metrics that prove that we make a difference in the products people select and depend on.

The resources are coming into place that should allow STC to develop and expand a validated program library from which chapters and individuals can purchase downloadable programming suitable for meetings or podcasts so you can increase skills on demand. STC should be extraordinary at this — we're a global educational nonprofit organization of communicators! And the ability to access this kind of career enrichment is one test of STC's value.

We also need to improve STC's value where you measure it most — in your pay. By helping the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics adopt a contemporary definition of what we do, STC can drive fair compensation for the expanded range of skills we represent in the U.S. and internationally.

2. Replenishment

We can no longer defer expanding our presence in schools or encouraging promising students who are considering a career in technical communication. I will encourage an active and growing partnership with universities to develop and communicate the Body of Knowledge and our understanding of the marketplace. We need to encourage curricula that are congruent with our view of the profession and the needs of future employers.

STC's future growth and energy depend on meeting the needs of young communicators and the schools that motivate and educate them. Academic partnerships and student memberships must be priorities.

3. Recognition

We struggle to concisely tell our employers about the difference we make for them because the range of our contributions is so vast.

By celebrating the achievements of STC members publicly, we do two things. We rejoice in the success of our colleagues and learn from them. We also demonstrate to business leaders and other professions what we do and what it looks like when it's done well. A million dollars saved or won in any business represents our potential to perform at this level in all of them.

I fully believe that we make products and ideas more competitive in the marketplace. Through our hands, ideas become more persuasive, explanations clearer, help more usable, customers more satisfied, and products better.

The STC website doesn't need job definitions. It needs testimonials, demonstrations, and celebrations that show what we did and continue to do everyday. I will celebrate your successes and publish them to the world.

4. Resources

As treasurer, I've helped manage STC as a business. The Board and the STC office have measurably improved their capacity to support society members and their communities. New investments are improving STC's membership experience. Despite economic challenges, we will continue to increase the value of membership, particularly through development of targeted education products while we examine the potential of certification.

I will continue to work with our Executive Director to decrease the cost of governing the society. Face-to-face board meetings have been reduced from 3 to 2 per year, and the office has been relocated to achieve savings. In fairness, the hard work of finding new facilities has been done by the office staff, who continue to suggest best practices and to seek economies without impacting the services you need. We need to continue the benefits of this teamwork.

5. Relationships and combinations

It helps to know that STC is not alone. Other organizations are feeling the pinch of tough economic times. We're each rowing harder, yet we continue to stay in our lanes. Why?

Among groups that share our professional interests, we may find that we are a stronger organization and have the ability to enrich others through relationships yet to be discussed. We could combine a competition, perhaps, or share a conference elsewhere. We should be bold enough to consider merging a weaker association into STC if a mutual benefit can result. Perhaps one that already has experience with certification?

We have not done enough in this area, and it's important for us to start.

And in conclusion

I hope that my vision and concerns for STC are yours as well. I ask for your vote in this election, but let me encourage you to vote for any candidate who shares your views. STC needs your full participation if it is to best serve your needs.

W.C. Wiese, Treasurer, STC

Suzanne Guess

A candidate for a two-year term (2009 – 2011) on the Nominating Committee. See information from Suzanne Guess.

Statement from Aiesa Moyna, Candidate for STC Treasurer

When I was asked to consider running for STC treasurer several months ago, the outlook for our global economy was uncertain. Today, it seems downright bleak. Then, layoffs were rare and shocking. Today, they seem to be commonplace. Then, the stock market was down. Today, the market is at the lowest point in a decade. Then, employers might pay annual STC dues as a

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professional development expense. Today, some members have had to choose between paying their own dues and paying a utility or grocery bill.

The environment around us has changed, and the next two years will be a challenging time to serve as treasurer of a nonprofit professional association. Still, my commitment and my reasons for running have not changed.

I want to serve STC as treasurer to help ensure the continuing success of the Society, which has contributed so much to my professional and personal development. I want to give back, and I want to help ensure that others who follow me will be able to benefit from STC in the same way.

I joined STC as a college freshman 25 years ago. (Go ahead; do the math. I'm running for treasurer, after all.) As a student member, STC offered me opportunities to grow as a technical communicator through exposure to educators and professional mentors, plus the chance to assume chapter leadership roles. As a new professional, STC offered me employment opportunities, ongoing education and volunteer roles in which to broaden my technical skills and gain leadership experience. As a seasoned communicator, STC today offers me a network of other professionals with whom to share experiences and lessons, as well as volunteer roles in which to sharpen my project management and leadership skills.

Serving as treasurer would give me a chance to return the favor, helping to ensure the ongoing financial viability of the Society. In this way, I hope to help ensure that STC continues to serve other technical communication students, professionals, educators and leaders for years to come.

My experience in STC and the field of technical communication has prepared me for this role. I've served STC in a variety of roles at the community, regional and Society level. As treasurer for two STC communities, I learned the Society's required processes for budgeting, managing expenses and reporting within the rules for nonprofit tax-exempt organizations set by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. I also learned the importance of following these practices to ensure the financial security of the local community and avoid jeopardizing the tax-exempt status of the entire Society.

I currently work as a communications director at American Express Company, supporting the Chief Information Officer and Chief Information Security Officer. In this and previous roles, I've managed and tracked spending for projects with multiple work

streams. I've also gained experience in public affairs, compliance and technology development for a financial services corporation, which has made me comfortable with providing fiscal transparency under scrutiny by business, industry and regulatory entities.

To learn more about me, my involvement with STC and my career as a technical communicator, read my biography on the STC Candidates' page at <http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/>. When you vote in the coming weeks, I hope you'll consider me for treasurer.

Aiessa Moyna, Associate Fellow

Brian J. Lindgren: Running for STC Treasurer

Hello, and thank you in advance for taking the time to read this message. As per the heading, I am a candidate for STC Treasurer. Two questions that come to mind are "Why are you running for a seat on the board?" and "Why are you running for treasurer?" The simple answer to both: I was asked.

A year ago, almost to the day, at the 2008 International Technical Communications Competitions (ITCC), former STC President Mark Hanigan and I were chatting at an after-event social with current First Vice President Cynthia Currie and International Competitions Manager Karen Baranich. This was a couple of months before I was formally named Associate Fellow. Mark and I had briefly met about 12 years earlier when he was Director-Sponsor of my region, and we reconnected at this after-hours event. As we talked about my STC background and forthcoming Associate Fellowship, he said, "Maybe next you should consider a national seat."

Honestly, to that point I had never considered such a thing, but Mark's seemingly out-of-the-blue comment stayed with me. Some six months later the nominating committee emailed me that my name had been mentioned for possible consideration as a candidate for the STC Board of Directors. Naturally I was honored, and filed the paperwork accordingly, figuring that I would be best suited as a Director on the board.

A week or so later the Nominating Committee contacted me again. After reviewing my resume, they wondered if I might consider running for Treasurer. In hindsight, I imagine they picked up on my previous business ownership, and my current involvement with Government requests for proposal. The official STC description reads, "Candidates for treasurer should have some business experience, familiarity with managing a budget, a sense about the financial impact of initiatives,

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expectation of inevitable expenses, and comfort with spreadsheets." Guilty as charged.

The description continues, "a good candidate is willing to advocate for fiscal responsibility and have a different viewpoint from the rest of the Board of Directors." Having a divergent opinion is certainly one of my strengths — sometimes to a fault! Again, I was honored that the committee asked me to run for Treasurer, and I accepted. I have benefited greatly from involvement with STC, and if running for Treasurer is a way for me to give back, I am happy to do so.

There is an old riddle, "How can you spot an extroverted engineer? He looks at **your** shoes while he's talking to you." While I am not an engineer, I certainly have some of the same traits, and I am not particularly enamored with talking about myself. I have set up a website — www.brianjlindgren.com — that provides some insight into my background. Please take the time to review my past involvement with STC, with other technical and volunteer organizations, and my resume. If you believe I will serve STC as your Treasurer, please vote for me. Once again, that I was asked to run is a major honor.

Thank you again for your time in reviewing my information.

Regards,

Brian J. Lindgren, Associate Fellow

Chapter reminders

Amazon.com helps fund STC

Reaching Amazon.com through the portal on the home page of STC's website (www.stc.org) contributes to funding programs that have no direct revenue stream, such as committee work. STC receives a small percentage from every purchase made through the portal.

NEO STC listserv

[NOTE: As of 2015, the chapter listserv has been supplanted by our LinkedIn presence. Please refer to the [current chapter website](#) for details.]

To subscribe or change your settings for the Northeast Ohio STC listserv, see <http://mailman.stc.org/mailman/listinfo/stcneohio-l>.

Please let Kris Henige, the NEO STC Listserv Administrator, know if you have any questions.

Premium pages for members

[NOTE: As of 2016, the current NEO STC website does not have password-protected content.]

NEO STC has some Premium pages for NEO STC members only. These pages include links to our very own Wiki, an Employer Directory — a listing of businesses that hire technical communicators — and more.

To enter the Premium pages, you will need a user name and password — this is different from the STC International site. Please contact our Webmaster for password information.

Change of address? Remember to tell the STC office

Send new addresses to the STC office to avoid interrupted delivery of *Intercom* and *Technical Communication*. Some members assume that informing the post office of their new address is enough to ensure that all of their mail is forwarded. However, the United States Postal Service forwards only first-class mail, not publications such as *Intercom* and *Technical Communication*.

Members may also update their contact and mailing information on the STC website.

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See something interesting? Tell us about it!

Many of our NEO STC members are also members of another STC community or SIG. If you receive a newsletter and find an interesting article, please consider passing it on to the Lines and Letters editors at newsletter@neostc.org.

You can also submit articles directly through
<http://www.neostc.org/lines/submit.html>.