

### President's column — Keep the momentum going for 2008 – 2009

*By Amy Vogt (avogt@ppipubs.com)*

#### Reflection on the 2007– 2008 Year

We are coming off of an amazing year of accomplishments for NEO STC! This was a year of pulling together as a team and as a community of strength. I have heard that a successful team is one in which every member wants the other members of the team to succeed. We definitely had this kind of energy and support in our community this year!

We had the incredible success of the Regional Conference, Bob Young and Angie Dianetti were honored with the Distinguished Chapter Service Award (DCSA), Jeanette Evans was named our chapter's newest Associate Fellow, we won the Membership Renewal Challenge, and earned Distinction in the PR Competition.

We attracted technical communications "celebrities" at our meetings and events: Susan Burton, Scott Abel, Bernard Aschwanden, Chris Juillet, Neil Perlin, and... Bob Dianetti.

We truly have something to be proud of!

#### Thanks to our 2007 – 2008 President, Tricia Spayer!

It has been an honor to work with Tricia this year. With all of the stress and challenges of being President during the Regional Conference year, Trish was always positive — no matter what happened, professional, and fun to be with! I want to thank her for everything she has given to the community this year — and on a personal level, the mentoring and example she gave to me.

She has been extremely modest with her accomplishments this year, so you may not even realize how much she has been doing behind the scenes. Trish was a large part of the Regional Conference and PR competition teams, she supported the Membership Renewal with June Muhic, set up the Technical Task Force, mastered Constant Contact, and has been starting to work with the committees to document our processes. She recognized volunteers before herself on every occasion. I don't believe I've ever heard her say anything negative about anyone or anything.

She has been continually devoted to serving the NEO community and has become a strong, positive leader and a great friend!

#### Looking ahead to the 2008 – 2009 year

My goals this year can be summarized by three words: Energy, Balance, and Fun.

(I know. This sounds like a flavored water drink or new-age granola bar.)

##### Energy

We generated so much of this last year, especially with the Regional Conference! I would like to keep this momentum going! We need to share this energy with each other — join the skills and talents of committees together — and share with the community!

##### Balance

This is a personal goal in my life. We all have other commitments to balance. It's hard to have time for everything. Family, work, religion, exercise, and keeping up our skills or education are just some of the elements of our lives.

I would like to have at least one meeting this year that is available online to be more inclusive for our members who can not travel across counties to attend or those who have young children. I would like to have a meeting or fundraiser this year that includes our families. I don't want anyone to feel overwhelmed by responsibilities.

##### Fun

There were only going to be two words, but I've heard these things are better in sets of three — and this one is a really important one.

If you are able to play and have fun, success will follow naturally. I would like to have fun this year and extend an invitation to all of you to join me.

Please consider becoming more involved with our chapter this year. We have an energetic, creative group! Volunteering on a committee is a great way to meet them and ... have fun! Contact me at vogt@ppipubs.com for more information about volunteer opportunities.

#### Introducing the 2008 – 2009 NEO STC Board and Committees

Please help welcome the new 2008 – 2009 Executive Board, committee chairs and volunteers!

Executive Board:

- ◆ President: Amy Vogt
- ◆ Vice President: Denise Kadilak

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



June 2008 • Volume 24 Issue 8

Page 2

- ◆ Secretary: Renee Murray
- ◆ Treasurer: Ginny Haas
- ◆ Immediate Past President: Tricia Spayer

### Committees:

- ◆ Academic Relations: Jeanette Evans, Sarah Burke, co-chairs
- ◆ Consulting and Independent Contracting Special Interest Group (CIC SIG): Lori Klepfer
- ◆ Community: NOCA representative: Ginny Haas; CTSC representative: Amy Vogt
- ◆ Competitions: (chair open); Sherri Henkin, representative, (another two representatives needed)
- ◆ Education: (chair and representative positions open)
- ◆ Employment: Renee Murray, David Cherney, co-chairs; Paul Hanrahan, representative
- ◆ Networking Lunches: Angie Dianetti, Jill McCauslin, co-chairs
- ◆ Newsletter: Barb Philbrick, Jeanette Evans, co-chairs; Sherri Henkin, Jan Lowry, Lisa Mileusnich, Bob Clark, Paul Holland, Sharon Resar, representatives
- ◆ Membership: June Muhic — chair, (another representative needed)
- ◆ Programs: Bob Young, Denise Kadilak, Tricia Spayer, Lori Woods, Paulette Henning, Kris Henige, Elena Dunne
- ◆ Public Relations: Jean Church, chair; (another two representatives needed)
- ◆ Web site: Paul Holland, chair; Candace Wintering and Paul Hanrahan, representatives
- ◆ Member-at-Large: Stephanie Webster

Thanks to everyone who has already accepted a position on the board!

Please contact Amy Vogt ([avogt@ppipubs.com](mailto:avogt@ppipubs.com)) if you are interested in volunteering next year!

### Past President's column

*By Tricia Spayer ([tspayer@yahoo.com](mailto:tspayer@yahoo.com))*

It has been my privilege and pleasure serving the NEO STC chapter as president this past year. Before I took office, I noticed that we had a lot of excited, dedicated

people in this chapter, and that it had a lot of momentum. There were big things that many people wanted to accomplish. It was my goal to keep the momentum going and hopefully leave the chapter in a great position to continue forward.

It is not an easy job being president. Not too long ago, I was one of the people sitting in the back of the room hoping I wouldn't have to say anything. But I took this challenge seriously and gave it all I had. I feel I've learned a lot about leadership, which is great, because I don't get to do this kind of thing in my department of one at work. But I also feel I've made some great friends and feel like I've become part of NEO STC.

Some of the things we have accomplished this past year are:

- ◆ Won Chapter of Excellence from STC International
- ◆ Held a successful and profitable Regional Conference
- ◆ Won an award of Distinction from the STC International PR Competition
- ◆ Won the STC Renewal Challenge for our size category, which gave us the opportunity to raffle four free conference registrations
- ◆ Held a successful Software Saturday on January 12, where we invited Bernard Aschwanden from Toronto to teach XML/DITA
- ◆ Launched an Academic Scholarship, and awarded a college student \$1000 towards her education
- ◆ Started a new PR effort by distributing brochures through the Cuyahoga County Public Library system
- ◆ Increased outside awareness of STC through participation in the Cleveland Technical Societies Council (CTSC), which is a society of technical societies
- ◆ Purchased a Constant Contact e-mail account. This has enhanced our ability to communicate with our members and maintain e-mail distribution lists
- ◆ Continued our successful networking lunches program
- ◆ Continued our New Member Orientation program. We invite new members to a monthly meeting and hold an orientation meeting prior to the regular program. This makes new members aware of the opportunities available in our chapter, and introduces them to our board members

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



June 2008 • Volume 24 Issue 8

Page 3

- ◆ Began the work of our Technical Task Force, which we intend to continue over the next year or years. This will help our employment efforts by automatically pulling in job notices to our web page. We are also working out other technical challenges

I hope you will join me in welcoming our incoming president, Amy Vogt. Amy has many great ideas for the future of our community. She has energy, enthusiasm, and a great respect for our members. I have gotten to know Amy more over the last year, and consider her a good friend (despite what a certain video might imply). I have great confidence in Amy, and know she'll make a terrific president of our chapter next year.

### Leadership workshop

*By Tricia Spayer (tspayer@yahoo.com)*

NEO STC is proud to host this full-day workshop, coordinated by Dr. Jackie Damrau, STC Fellow from the Lone Star Chapter.

#### What is it?

In this workshop, participants will learn how to develop a leadership plan. A leadership plan can be built for personal use, for business use, or for use as you take on your volunteer role as an STC leader for your community.

STC leaders from the past and present designed this training material from their own volunteer work with STC and their professional lives in technical communication, training, education, document design, rhetoric, organization development, performance improvement, and technology. They all share pleasure in passing to you what they found important for themselves.

#### Who should attend?

Anyone who is interested in learning about leadership, whether as a personal interest, for business, or any leader (committee and otherwise) in an STC community. We recommend that the following attend:

- ◆ Administrative council
- ◆ Committee chairs
- ◆ People interested in the future of our community
- ◆ People interested in becoming better leaders

#### Details

Date: Saturday August 2, 2008

Place: Maple Heights branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library

Cost: That's the great news!! For NEO STC members, your admission is FREE!

Register today! Send a message to Stephanie Webster

#### Upcoming events

- ◆ 6/13/08: Networking lunch: Brew Kettle, 8377 Pearl Road, Strongsville. RSVP to Jill McCauslin (jmccauslin@radcomservices.com).
- ◆ 6/25/08: Live Web seminar. "Decreasing Document Size and Increasing Document Usability," presented by Cheryl Morrison and Susan Ledford. Sign up at <http://stc.org/edu/seminars01.asp>.
- ◆ 6/29/08: Movie and dinner with NEOSTC. Come see Get Smart with us at the Cinemark Theater in Valley View. Dinner afterwards at Quaker Steak & Lube. RSVP to Amy Vogt (avogt@ppipubs.com).
- ◆ 7/16/08: Networking lunch: Blake's Seafood, 9 Main Street, Crocker Park, Westlake. RSVP to Jill McCauslin (jmccauslin@radcomservices.com).
- ◆ 7/16/08: Live Web seminar. "Cool Tools for Tech Writers for Less Than \$100," presented by Nicky Bleiel. Sign up at <http://stc.org/edu/seminars01.asp>.
- ◆ 8/2/08: Free Leadership Workshop. See Leadership workshop for more information.
- ◆ 8/13/08: Live Web seminar. "Wikis and Knowledge Management," presented by Nicky Bleiel. Sign up at <http://stc.org/edu/seminars01.asp>.
- ◆ 10/10 – 10/11/08: The Practical Conference on Communication (PCOC), sponsored by the East Tennessee STC Chapter. Visit the East Tennessee chapter Web site for more information and to register.

#### Meeting review: Hilarious video marks transition

*By Jeanette Evans (jeanette.evans@sbcglobal.net)*

It is hard to do justice in this write-up to the hilarious video we saw at our May 15 meeting. Let's just say it explains a lot about the power and prestige that come

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



June 2008 • Volume 24 Issue 8

Page 4

with being an officer in NEO STC. The video is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yFMCCiR8aOk>.

The creation of the video is explained by outgoing president Tricia Spayer: "Adam Killian and Al Storey, who work at Pressco, got the idea for the video from things we've said all year, like I should have my nametag on the door as Madame President, with my secret service agents outside, and red carpet. Adam is an electrical engineer who does movies and editing on his own time. He has equipment, lighting, and an editing studio at home. Adam had all the scenes in his mind, a whole storyboard, and list of shots. All we had to do was show up and do what we were told — till we got it right! Adam also assisted with our NEO STC conference in October by supplying some projectors for the classrooms. It's great to work with such fun, creative people ... nice to get out of the element of day-to-day activities."

Tricia goes on to explain that Al Storey works in marketing at Pressco. He is very creative, is friends with Adam, and helped Adam with all the setup, lighting, props, and editing. Al came up with many of the scenarios in the movie and worked with Adam to create the storyboard. Al also helped with our October conference by helping to create the posters that were part of our award-winning PR competition entry. He also inspired the Rock & Write graphic.

As for the rest of the May meeting, it included a panel discussion on career transitions and year-end awards presentations. It was not exactly true confessions time at the meeting, but outgoing president Tricia Spayer did reveal that in high school she was voted most shy. But honestly, she did a great job hosting the evening and explaining about the year we had as a community. The panel discussion included Sherri Henkin, Sarah Burke, and June Muhic. In another moment of true confession (just kidding!), Sherri wondered aloud about what she was thinking when she moved here from LA. Sarah was asked if she in her work as an editor uses a red pen (she also explained how as editor she does not have the final say in a publication and it is her job to make authors look good). June explained how she used to be a rocket scientist (working for Rockwell in California). Those were some of the moments that stick out for me. The speakers did a great job explaining about their career transitions from technical writer to business analyst, editor, and instructional designer.

The Washington Division of URS ably hosted the meeting. The company is a provider of planning, engineering design, operations, constructions, and

maintenance services to public and provide sector clients worldwide. The Washington Division web site is at [www.wgint.com](http://www.wgint.com) and the URS web site is at [www.urscorp.com](http://www.urscorp.com). Jean Church gets the credit for helping to organize the meeting.

The awards presented at the meeting recognized contributions of people in our community on both the local and international level. For me, some high points were awards for those who put together the Crucial Communicator conference, won the international PR award, won Distinguished Service awards, and received our first scholarship. I still can't get over how our group won the renewal challenge to receive four conference registrations.

I don't know where to begin to thank everyone for the associate fellow nomination. I know that much work went into the process. It really means so much to me to get the award. There are many people in our community who deserve to be nominated for this award. I hope we continue our work in NEO STC in nominating these people!

### NEO STC awarded Chapter of Excellence

*By Tricia Spayer (tspayer@yahoo.com)*

It is with great pleasure that I get to announce that NEO STC has once again achieved the status of Chapter of Excellence! We were presented this award on Leadership Day at the 55th Technical Communication Summit in Philadelphia.

Our citation reads: "For conducting an outstanding Regional Conference, starting new public relations activities, and starting a new scholarship program for technical communication students at Ohio universities."

The Community Achievement Awards (CAA) committee went on to say that: "As one of the most consistent and active communities in the CAA process, your community was again a strong contender for the Community of Distinction award. I hope that your community will continue to aspire for that level of recognition from STC. Congratulations to all members of the Northeast Ohio Community!"

To get this award, we completed a lengthy CAA application. In this application, we listed myriad innovative activities that our chapter did this last year, and completed multiple levels of activities that STC finds desirable in a healthy community.

Once again, congratulations to everyone in NEO STC, and a special thank you to all who made this award

possible. Our chapter indeed has great energy and enthusiasm to continue forward.

### Evans named STC Associate Fellow

*Biography by Kelly Graham*

The Society for Technical Communication honored Northeast Ohio's Jeanette Evans by naming her a 2008 Associate Fellow.

"Individuals chosen to be Associate Fellow are the cream of the technical communication profession," explains Mark Clifford, STC president. "These are individuals who contribute significantly to the good of the field by conducting research, mentoring young professionals, giving presentations, and playing a large part in being volunteer leaders."

Jeanette earned an M.S. in Technical Communication Management from Mercer University, School of Engineering, and a B.A. in Education from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. She also studied project management at Baldwin Wallace College and has taken MRI Technologist Training.

Her technical communication career spans 28 years with positions at Rockwell Automation and Philips Medical Systems (Picker International, Inc.). Jeanette's freelance contracts included Cleveland Clinic Foundation, Case Western Reserve University's School of Medicine Department of Pathology, and Case's National Prion Surveillance Center. She taught the first Introduction to Technical Communication classes (leading toward a certificate in technical communication) at the Professional Development Institute in their Workforce and Economic Development Division.

Before working as a technical writer, Jeanette worked as a technical translator (Russian), where she got a background in programmable controllers and mainframe computers, acting as interpreter and translator for several groups who were training in the United States (primarily for Cleveland Crane and Engineering and Combustion Engineering). During this period, Jeanette was a member of the American Translators Association (ATA). She gave a presentation about how the skills of a translator can transfer to those required as a technical writer.

Jeanette has dedicated more than 28 years to the Northeast Ohio chapter — the longest service of any member. When first joining STC, she became an officer in the NEO STC chapter and organized the first local technical communication conference, working with the

Cleveland Engineering Society. She remained active in local activities, involved for many years as a judge and later organizer of NEO STC sponsored publications competitions. She has been a frequent contributor to the NEO STC newsletter for about the last 10 years and recently became a co-chair.

She has been active on the international level for many years as well. She presented at several conferences, judged in international competitions, and published in Intercom, including an article that was featured as one of the three most requested in the last ten years.

In 2007, Jeanette won the Distinguished Chapter Service Award. She has shared her knowledge and experience through articles in Society-level and chapter-level publications, and through a variety of conference presentations.

Jeanette's Associate Fellow plaque reads, "For continuous service to the Society, to the Northeast Ohio chapter, and to her fellow members through her volunteer efforts, presentations, and encouragement and mentoring of less-experienced members and students."

Jeanette lives in Highland Heights, Ohio, with her husband Richard and feline friends, Ivy and Chester. The couple has two adult daughters, Barb and Sacha.

### Volunteer recognition

*By Tricia Spayer (tspayer@yahoo.com)*

At the May 15 meeting, I had the privilege of recognizing numerous volunteers for their tremendous efforts this past year, and in several cases, for many years.

### Distinguished Chapter Service Award (DCSA)

The Society for Technical Communication has long recognized the importance of the hard work and commitment of members of its chapters. Without their energy and enthusiasm, the Society would cease to be the largest, most effective, and most prestigious organization of technical communicators in the world. DCSA is a Society-sponsored program to acknowledge the work of those chapter members who repeatedly provide exemplary service to the Society through their chapter activities.

**Angie Dianetti** is an outstanding, long-term member of our chapter. She has volunteered for many positions over the years, including Programs committee, chapter re-chartering committee, networking lunches, which she

currently co-chairs, and most recently, registration coordinator for our Regional Conference. She was manager/co-manager for two previous Region 4 conferences and one local Technicom (a local technical communications conference, essentially coordinated just by Angie and one other NEO STC member). Angie has also presented at STC international and regional conferences, as well as STC chapter meetings, and had an article published in Intercom. She continues to help our chapter, even during times of personal hardship.

We presented a plaque to Angie with this citation: "For your outstanding, sustained contributions to the Northeast Ohio Community, especially for your work with our regional conferences, and for your leadership, expertise, and willingness to help."

**Bob Young** displays a great deal of enthusiasm for STC and for our chapter. He spearheaded a membership drive that resulted in an 18% increase in membership during his year as chapter president. Also during his year as president, he started a membership recognition program, a new member orientation program, and a budget line item to send the chapter's incoming president to Leadership Day at the STC International conference. These programs are still being used in our chapter today.

Bob also displayed his dedication to STC by running for director. He recently led the chapter by co-chairing the Crucial Communicator Regional Conference, which was extremely successful, as well as profitable for our chapter.

We presented a plaque to Bob with this citation: "For your leadership as president of the Northeast Ohio Community, and as co-chair of the Crucial Communicator, as well as your unfailing enthusiasm and continued leadership of activities in the community."

### Recognition of Associate Fellow

**Jeanette Evans** received the honor of Associate Fellow at the Technical Communication Summit in Philadelphia. However, we also wanted to honor her in front of the chapter she does so much for.

In addition to membership grades (general, senior member, and student member), STC bestows three elective, honorary ranks: Associate Fellow, Fellow, and Honorary Fellow. To be qualified for Associate Fellow, candidates must have been active in technical communication for at least fifteen years and members of the Society for at least ten years. They must have

attained distinction in the field of technical communication.

Congratulations, Jeanette! We are proud to have you as a member of our community.

### Committee of the Year

It was a very good year for NEO STC. We had a very dedicated group of people working on many committees. One of these committees stands out in my mind as going above and beyond the call of duty. This committee is the **Crucial Communicator Core committee**. This was the committee that organized our successful Regional Conference in October 2007. The participating members were:

- ◆ Stephanie Webster — co-chair
- ◆ Bob Young — co-chair
- ◆ Kim Lindsey — coordinated our excellent speakers
- ◆ Jean Church — PR, minuteman, and ideas generator
- ◆ Paul Holland — Web site and Constant Contact e-mails
- ◆ Denise Kadilak — treasurer — kept us on budget. Also helped coordinate speakers.
- ◆ Ginny Haas — sponsor and exhibitor coordinator
- ◆ Angie Dianetti — took care of all the registrations
- ◆ Sherri Henkin — did PR, wrote articles, contacted other chapters
- ◆ Sharon Resar Sternburg — did PR, wrote articles, contacted other organizations
- ◆ Myself — graphics, posters and printed materials

### President's Achievement Award

Awarded to an individual by the Northeast Ohio community president for consistent contributions to keep the community running smoothly.

Awarded to **Renee Murray**. Renee initially agreed to be on the Education committee in charge of Webinars. But since those were not happening until recently, she offered to cover the Employment committee duties. She was in charge of posting resumes and screening job postings. There was a lot of re-coding that had to be done, and a bit of frustration at times when things didn't seem to post right. But she stuck with it, joined our Technical Task Force, and continued to screen job postings to make sure they were legitimate.

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



June 2008 • Volume 24 Issue 8

Page 7

### Volunteer of the Year

Awarded to individuals by the Northeast Ohio community president for their outstanding efforts to help the community accomplish high goals.

Awarded to **Anne Paczula**. Anne was a new member as of last year, and she agreed to take on the responsibility of our Software Saturday programs.

Soon after our initial meeting, Anne performed a community survey to determine topics, level of interest, and day of training. She published those results in our newsletter, and used the results to plan Software Saturdays for the year.

Anne contacted several potential trainers to determine their availability, and she also contacted several possible venues, which was no easy task. We held a successful Software Saturday on January 12 with Bernard Aschwanden from Toronto, and Anne continued to plan more. She already lined up a couple speakers for next year and has researched many different facilities.

### Active Volunteer recognition

This program was started by Bob Young two years ago. Its goal was to recognize people for active participation in our chapter. We like it when people volunteer to work on a committee, serve on the board, attend meetings, attend networking lunches, and host webinars, and other things! This participation helps you to get more out of your STC membership, and adds value to the rest of our chapter. We devised a point system that tracked member participation by doing all those above-mentioned things. It was tracked from May 2007 to April 2008. In the end, it really did show our most active volunteers. You'll recognize many of these names from other awards presented, but these folks really were our most active members for the past year:

- ◆ Amy Vogt
- ◆ Stephanie Webster
- ◆ Denise Kadilak
- ◆ Bob Young
- ◆ Paul Holland
- ◆ Jean Church
- ◆ Sarah Burke
- ◆ Jeanette Evans
- ◆ Sherri Henkin
- ◆ Angie Dianetti
- ◆ Ginny Haas
- ◆ Jill McCauslin

There are many others who deserve thanks and recognition this year, so it was really a difficult decision to narrow these down. Thank you to all committee members and board members for all your hard work, dedication, and willingness to help NEO STC over this past year.

### Call for volunteers

*By Tricia Spayer (tspayer@yahoo.com)*

We are searching for several people to help NEO STC achieve high goals in the coming year (June 2008 – June 2009). By volunteering, you get to meet new people, try things you haven't done before, pad your resume, and learn leadership skills. But most of all, I find that working with a great group of people is really a lot of fun!

### Competitions committee

We need a few people to organize our technical publications and online competitions. The call for submissions usually takes place around the end of September, so we need to get started soon to organize this effort. This will be a multiple person committee.

### Education committee

The education committee organizes events that further the education of our members and other interested technical communicators. The events include:

- ◆ Software Saturdays: Pick up where Anne Paczula has left off. Anne has already lined up speakers and possible venues for this next year, but she will have her hands full with her expected twins and young son. Mentoring provided.
- ◆ Webinars: Watch the STC site for upcoming Webinar events. Notify the chapter of the event and put out a call for local hosts. Help the local host organize the event. Mentoring provided.

To find out how you can help, contact Amy Vogt or Tricia Spayer

### PCOC 25 Regional Conference: Call for papers

July 7 is the deadline for submissions for the 25th Practical Conference on Communication (PCOC) to be held October 10 – 11 at the Chattanooga Hotel and Conference Center in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Technical Communication in a Global Economy is the theme for the PCOC this year.

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



June 2008 • Volume 24 Issue 8

Page 8

As explained by conference manager Tim Hammon, who is also a Single-Sourcing SIG member, "Our theme this year lends itself to single-sourcing and CMS-related topics, so I wanted to make sure you all saw our Call for Papers. The conference atmosphere is very collegial and is perfect for trying out a new talk or for polishing one you want to give at the national conference next year. Please feel free to spread the word to colleagues you think might be interested."

You are invited to submit a proposal for a workshop, discussion, or presentation on practical strategies for effective international technical communication. For sample topics, submission details, and more, visit [stc-etc.org/pcoc\\_call.asp](http://stc-etc.org/pcoc_call.asp). The conference team looks forward to seeing intelligent and innovative topics for PCOC 25.

Mark Hanigan, former STC president, notes that "STC's PCOC is a colorful, iconic entity of STC lore! This year's edition marks the re-instatement of one of STC's oldest small-venue conferences, which still holds the record for the longest conference run that offers proceedings outside of the STC Annual Conference itself. I have personally trekked to five of these events from Florida — each one was so worth it. Besides seeing and hearing quality speakers, I count among my closest STC friends individuals that I first met at a PCOC! I know that this year's edition will be no different, a value that will have you humming that you can afford to board the Chattanooga Choo Choo!"

### Changes to the 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.]

The Northeast Ohio STC listserv has been moved to a new platform called Mailman.

STC has been moving from the Lyris platform to Mailman for several years, with over 50 lists already converted. Until now, this was a voluntary transition. Because of increasing instability with Lyris, STC recently decided to transfer all lists, including ours, before June 30, 2008.

The new address is [stcneohio-l@mailman.stc.org](mailto:stcneohio-l@mailman.stc.org). If possible, please white-list anything from [@mailman.stc.org](mailto:@mailman.stc.org) to ensure that you receive messages.

To change your settings, go to <http://mailman.stc.org/mailman/listinfo/stcneohio-l>. Scroll down to the bottom of the page to log in.

NOTE: The new platform does not allow you to post from the Web interface, so you MUST use an e-mail client to send messages.

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

### NEO STC scholarship winner update

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

The Academic Relations Committee is delighted to announce that **Katie Marburger** is the winner of our first NEO STC student scholarship. Katie is a sophomore in the technical and professional communication (TPC) program at Cedarville University. Her letter of recommendation from Professor Sandi Harner described Katie as an outstanding student academically and a leader in STC since her arrival on campus. Professor Harner noted that Katie is the kind of student who exemplifies what professors wish to see in all of their students.

Currently a member of the Cedarville student chapter of STC, Katie served the chapter as secretary in the past academic year and will serve as second vice president next fall. This means that she will automatically become president of the student chapter during her senior year.

In her scholarship application letter, Katie wrote that through the TPC program at Cedarville, students complete a comprehensive list of technical communication courses to build a broad skill set. She also pointed out that while job titles in the field of technical communication are changing, the skill sets remain the same.

Katie shared with us the prominence that audience analysis and usability testing have taken in her program. In addition, she says, "I've learned that carefully planning usable information for the intended audience is at the heart of technical communication."

Some of Katie's current work includes helping her STC chapter to plan a conference at Cedarville, only the second time that the chapter has attempted to host such a conference. She has also been active in Cedarville's fundraising efforts, taking on projects with external clients who have later expressed their appreciation for her skill and professionalism. An additional activity that Katie is involved with is teaching conversational English to a group of Chinese MBA students at Wright State University.

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



Society for  
Technical  
Communication

June 2008 • Volume 24 Issue 8

Page 9

We sincerely wish Katie continuing success in her future studies and work and hope that she will put her budding technical communication skills to work in Northeast Ohio upon her graduation.

### Local members go national!

An article from NEO STC member **Lisa Adair**, of Rockwell Automation, appeared in the June 2008 issue of *Intercom*. The article, "Styling for Structure," was related to a presentation on editing that Lisa presented at the Cleveland Crucial Communicator conference. Congratulations, Lisa!

**Sherri Henkin** and **Sharon Resar Sternburg** had their article, "The Crucial Communicator's Role in Mortgage Banking," published on the STC web site as part of the "Telling our powerful story" section. The new section is geared toward a general audience of people who want to know more about technical communication. It features stories that have appeared in other STC publications, although Sharon and Sherri's article is an original that was written for the debut of this section. Read the article at <http://www.stc.org/story/mortgageBanking.asp>.

**Bob Dianetti** is serving on the 2009 Conference Advisory Committee as Stem Manager for the Content Creation and Delivery stem. If you have ideas for the content creation and delivery topics that you would like to see at next year's conference, please let him know. He is also looking for people to help review and evaluate proposals. You can contact Bob at [rdianetti@radcomservices.com](mailto:rdianetti@radcomservices.com).

### NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: Jean Church, Northeast Ohio Chapter of STC, [www.neostc.org/](http://www.neostc.org/)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PROMOTING YOUR BUSINESS OR NONPROFIT BY USING A PRESS RELEASE

PITTSBURGH, PA, APRIL 30, 2008 — Members of the Association of Independent Information Professionals (AIIP) and I went to the Renaissance Hotel in Pittsburgh to hear Andrea Carrero, President of Word Technologies ([www.wordtex.com/](http://www.wordtex.com/)), discuss how to write press releases that will be picked up by newspapers and publications.

Andrea has spent many years on both sides of press releases by submitting them for publication and by

receiving them as editor of a newspaper. In that one brief afternoon, she was able to explain why some (OK, a lot) of my previous efforts never appeared in print, despite my brilliant writing and editorial style. Editors are more inclined to print a press release if they don't have to write it themselves from submitted information, or, better yet, edit it much at all if you've already written it for them.

Consider including a "quote from someone of importance to the story you're trying to pitch," Carrero said. "It gives the impression of credibility for the topic, the company, the organization, or whatever it is you're trying to get publicized." A quote is typically included in or around the third paragraph.

Andrea gave us good advice and information for how to write and format press releases, examples of good press releases and public service announcements, and several lists of websites for distributing press releases. I enjoyed her workshop very much, and would recommend this workshop to anyone who wants to learn how to write a press release that gets printed.

### From the author, Jean Church

I want to thank the Northeast Ohio Chapter of STC for sending me to this workshop in Pittsburgh. I definitely feel I am better equipped to write a press release and serve my chapter in a more professional capacity. If you need a press release or public service announcement written for your chapter or business, you can reach me through the Northeast Ohio Chapter of STC at <http://www.neostc.org/>.

— 30 —

### "Safe Harbor Statement" Under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995

This release includes forward-looking statements intended to qualify for the safe harbor from liability established by the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These forward-looking statements generally can be identified by phrases such as Association of Independent Information Professionals (AIIP) or its management, and such as "inclined," "consider," "feel," or other words or phrases of similar import. Similarly, statements in this release that describe our chapter are also forward-looking statements. All such forward-looking statements are subject to certain risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those in forward-looking statements.

### Member profile: Elena Dunne

*By Jeanette Evans ([jeanette.evans@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jeanette.evans@sbcglobal.net))*

Elena Dunne is a new NEO STC member. The first STC event she attended was the October, 2007 NEO STC Crucial Communicator Regional Conference. Impressed by the energy of the conference, the high level of

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



June 2008 • Volume 24 Issue 8

Page 10

information at the sessions and the friendliness of the members, she decided to join STC in January of 2008.

Elena has a Bachelor's in Linguistics & Cross-Cultural Communication from Voronezh State University and a Bachelor's in Psychology from the College of Practical Psychology, Russia. Before coming to Kent State to do her Master's in Translation, she taught English and did some English–Russian translation and interpreting.

During her last semester in the Master's program at Kent State, she interned at Advanced Language Translation, a corporate translation and localization services provider based in Rochester, NY. After graduation, she joined the ALT team full time. Shortly after, she participated in ISO 9001-2000 training that the company was undergoing and, like the other members of the ALT team, felt that the continuous improvement philosophy struck the right chord. Ever since, she has made quality management the cornerstone of her project management approach. During ALT's development of its quality management system, she helped improve the company's terminology management, client review, translation memory, and style guide management processes. In addition, she contributed to the development of ALT's proprietary terminology management system and provided input for the improvement of the company's internal project management system.

In her five years at ALT, she has managed close to a thousand translation, localization, terminology management, and voice-over projects involving over 20 languages and lasting from one day to several months. In 2006, she returned to the Akron area and transitioned into a new position at Advanced Language, spearheading the company's expansion into Northeast Ohio while also managing complex translation and localization projects. She is also pursuing a Ph.D. in Translation Studies at Kent State University with a concentration in Translation Tools/Informatics. Her primary research interests are language project management (in particular, risk management) and terminology management.

Elena volunteered for over two years for the Project Management Institute, first as an external reviewer for the Work Breakdown Structure standard, and then as part of the Unified Lexicon Project effort, in which she eventually started and led the Translatability Review team.

A native of Russia, she is still in the process of learning about US culture and recently passed an informal, but nonetheless important cultural test by laughing at most

of the jokes in the Simpsons when her husband, a US native, laughs. Thanks once again to the nefarious influences of her husband, who is also a citizen of France, she has also become addicted to the annual French summer saga, *le Tour de France*.

Elena's father, a retired Soviet transport pilot, currently flies Antonov 124-100 cargo planes for a Russian cargo company. The An-124 is the largest cargo transport plane in the world, capable of carrying four Greyhound buses. This winter, as part of their ongoing efforts to eradicate cultural barriers, Elena and her husband visited Russia and made Buffalo wings — much to the Captain's delight.

By joining STC, Elena hopes to learn more about the processes that technical communicators follow. She would like to understand the challenges that they face to further explore how the transition and interaction occurs between technical communication and translation/localization. She hopes to share her knowledge and understanding of international communication from the perspective of a translator, localizer, and language project manager.

### Member profile: Jan Jones

*By Jeanette Evans (jeanette.evans@sbcglobal.net)*

Jan Jones is new to NEO STC. She has an Associate of Individualized Studies from Lorain County Community College (LCCC) with elements of hardware, networking, operating systems, basic programming, and Web design. The college approved her broad program because she wanted to be able to write about many aspects of information technology. Jan also took Introduction to Technical Writing at Tri-C and Business Communication at LCCC. She also holds a Bachelor's in Chemistry and Bachelors in Materials Engineering from the University of Michigan and Master's and Ph.D. in Macromolecular Science from Case.

Concerning her professional experience, Jan explains, "I worked for Union Carbide for over six years doing R&D on carbon fibers and industrial carbons. I wrote (with co-workers) a half-dozen or so journal publications and several in-house technical memoranda. The work that I got the best marks on was two hundred pages I wrote alone, reviewing the literature inside and outside the company on a certain aspect of the strength of carbon fibers."

Jan has broad technical interests that include information technology, metallurgy/materials science, and aviation, among others. She says, "Aviation is

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



June 2008 • Volume 24 Issue 8

Page 11

extremely interesting to me because my husband works at NASA and aviation is in the air at our house. He computes, but he also has a pilot's license and is a certified flight instructor. Aviation technology fascinates me."

Jan lives in Westlake with her husband and son, who is about to join the Marines as an aviation mechanic.

### Conference highlights

#### First-timers go to conference!

*By Sherri Henkin (shenkin@amtrust.com) and Julie Mason (julie.mason@parker.com)*

Julie and I were privileged to attend our first STC Technical Communication Summit this year. It was an awesome experience — full of excitement and energy, and a way to revitalize ourselves and our careers. There were many opportunities to delve into different aspects of our careers as well as explore some new facets. And equal opportunities to explore Philadelphia — by foot, by bus, and by boat!

The Technical Communication Summit is truly international. As I walked to the Opening Session, I greeted some folks. They returned my "hello" in heavily accented English, and introduced themselves as members from Japan! Some of the award recipients were from India. And our new president is from the U.K.

When most of us go sightseeing, we look for a guide book or web site (we're technical communicators, right?). Attending a Technical Communication Summit is like sightseeing, but there was no guide book with tips for the first timer. Julie and I created some tips based on information we dug for and learned along the way.

#### Tips for the First-Time Conference Attendee

- ◆ **Register early.** This saves you money and you are on all the update e-mails from STC. Book the hotel before the deadline. This ensures you a spot in the hotel closest to the conference site and it's another money-saving opportunity. Bring your receipts with you — you may need them for confirmation or validation.
- ◆ **Dress for adventure.** While you will want to look smart for the networking opportunities the conference offers, you will also want to get outside and explore! Choose clothes that easily transition from sub-arctic meeting rooms to balmy tourist attractions. And make sure your shoes are

comfortable enough for lots of walking, both indoors and out. Caveat: If you attend the Banquet, remember to bring a festive outfit.

- ◆ **Review the Technical Communication Summit web site.** As the Conference gets closer, STC updates this web site with the latest session information, materials, and general information.
- ◆ **Bring a bushel of business cards.** Even if you're not in the job market, you will want plenty of business cards. Not only will they help you keep in touch with all the new people you meet, but they also serve as your contest entry at many of the expo booths!
- ◆ **Exchange contact information.** Find out if anyone you know will be at the conference, and keep their cell phone numbers with you. Now you will be sure to have company for dinner at a nice restaurant, or a bus tour of the city. Or even a travel companion on the plane!
- ◆ **Research the city.** You will have plenty of chances for exploration, but they will likely be scattered throughout the day. Planning your must-sees in advance will prepare you to squeeze impromptu mini-excursions among your conference activities.
- ◆ **Create a spending plan.** Before you go, do a little math to include money for tips (have those dollars handy!), shuttles, taxis, tours, books, souvenirs, and of course, meals.
- ◆ **Review session materials.** These are available online before the conference. There are several sessions scheduled simultaneously and often it's hard to choose where to go. Reviewing the topics before the conference gives an idea of what to expect and ...
- ◆ **Have a Plan B.** The session you've chosen sounds absolutely fantastic — until five minutes in, when you you're fighting to stay awake. Luckily, it's common for people to slip in and out of sessions that they find less relevant (or more boring) than they'd hoped. By designating an alternative in advance, you'll always make the most of your time.
- ◆ **Attend a first-timer session.** It's like employee orientation — but shorter! The session leaders describe the types of sessions and provide tips on how to get the most out of the conference. The presenters offer suggestions about balancing all the learning with time off for good behavior!

- ◆ **SIG breakfast meetings and network luncheons.** Breakfast meetings are the annual business meetings for the SIG (and are free). Luncheons (pre-paid or pay at the conference) are a great place to network. Whether you are a member or not, consider attending some SIG meetings to get an idea of what each group does and the latest information for that section of the industry.
- ◆ **Attend the Awards Banquet.** There is a charge — and it's well worth it. The Banquet is a relaxing and enjoyable way to dine with colleagues and celebrate the honorees. This year we were fortunate to celebrate Jeannette Evans becoming an Associate Fellow. Congratulations, Jeannette!
- ◆ **Connect with other NEO STC'ers.** We had a great group this year. It's wonderful to travel with and sometimes sit with familiar faces. With a sizeable group, we were able to gather informally for a lunch, sightseeing, and even shopping!
- ◆ **Rest up.** This isn't camp, but the schedule can be as taxing as camp so rest is important. The days are long, the information is dispensed in mega-doses, and you'll be asking questions of the exhibitors and folks you meet. You will want to be alert, so allow some rest time during the day.
- ◆ **Volunteer to present.** If you've never presented before, volunteer to do this at a Progression Session. I discovered that I learned a lot about the subject I had prepared, had fun at the event, and met even more people. Two key benefits: I improved my presentation skills and received a discount on my registration!
- ◆ **Be flexible.** You've reviewed the session material, you've highlighted your first choice, and you have a Plan B. Then you meet a colleague you haven't seen in a while in the hallway and they say, "Hey, come to the session with me. The speaker is terrific." You think, "Well, it's not really my field. Should I? Shouldn't I?" Flexibility kicks in and you follow your colleague — you won't be sorry! (I did this and ended up attending one of the most enjoyable sessions of the Technical Communication Summit.)

So there you have it — a list to help you plan your trip to the 56th Technical Communication Summit, May 3–6, 2009 in Atlanta!

## Monte goes to the Technical Communication Summit

*Interview recorded by Sherri Henkin  
(shenkin@amtrust.com)*

*In which "Phil" (aka Philadelphia) interviews Monte, NEO STC's widely-traveled mascot*

Phil explains: "I invited Monte to the studio to interview him about his experiences at the 55th Technical Communication Summit."

**Phil:** Monte, welcome to our show. Thanks for agreeing to this interview. We're glad to have you in our studio today.

**Monte:** You're welcome. I'm happy to be here — and glad that Tricia could transport me today.

**Phil:** Monte, I understand that you are the NEO STC mascot. What do you do in that role?

**Monte:** Well, primarily I'm a conversation piece for the members and I help bring out the child in them (so that they don't act like stuffy adults all the time). My secondary role is to keep Tricia company when she goes to events. You know, Tricia is really shy, so having me along helps her be more outgoing.

**Phil:** Tricia is really shy? That's a shock — she speaks very well, conducts meetings like a pro — I'm really surprised. But back to what you do for the members. How do you help bring out the child in them?

**Monte:** I'll give you some examples from our latest adventure — a trip to Philadelphia, PA, to attend the STC Technical Communication Summit. First of all, it was truly exciting — attending all the events, seeing NEO STC'ers, and meeting new people. At the Exhibition Opening Tricia took me out so I could see what was going on.

**Phil:** Excuse me for interrupting — What do you mean about Tricia taking you out?

**Monte:** Oh. Well, to keep me safe and make sure I don't wander, Tricia keeps me in her backpack. No worries — it's airy in there and I have lots of room to jump around!

**Phil:** Thanks for the explanation. What did you do at the Exhibition?

**Monte:** We were roaming around and came upon our chapter's award-winning PR book entry. The group wanted a photo. They were all formal about it — you know, "You stand here." "Get someone to take the

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



June 2008 • Volume 24 Issue 8

Page 13

photo." "Now we have to make sure the book shows up nicely in the picture." Stuff like that. Then someone noticed me and said, "Hey, don't forget Monte. He reaps this reward, too!" And everyone started to giggle. Whew ... at least they lightened up!

**Phil:** And the photo came out clearly?

**Monte:** Of course. See?



**Phil:** Cute — all smiles. What other comic relief did you supply at the Technical Communication Summit?

**Monte:** Yep, I sure did supply some at the Banquet. Now banquets can be pretty formal affairs and in terms of dress, this one was. Gosh — some of the female officers even wore evening gowns!



**Phil:** What did you wear?

**Monte:** I had on my custom-made black shirt with the NEO STC logo.

**Phil:** "Custom-made"?

**Monte:** Sure! Tricia sees to it that I have custom-made garments for these formal affairs. Now, as I was saying ... We got to the Banquet and the ladies of the chapter sat down at their table and were doing all the proper etiquette things — taking out their napkins, smiling and chit-chatting with each other. Then I joined them.

**Phil:** Oh great — they had a seat for you?

**Monte:** Most definitely. A seat of honor — right in the middle of the table!

**Phil:** Um — isn't that a bit awkward? I mean, it was a formal event and you were sitting on the table?

**Monte:** Well, where else would I sit? I'm "under tall" and if I sit anywhere else, no one would see me! So sur la table is the best place for me! I had a great view and could talk with all my tablemates easily. When I came, then folks got all excited, "Oh great — Monte's here. We couldn't go to the Banquet without him." "Let's make sure he gets something to eat." They all broke out in giggles! I just love getting folks to laugh and enjoy themselves!



**Phil:** That must have been fun! On a serious note, though, weren't the chapter members there to learn? Weren't they attending the Technical Communication Summit to grow their skills and bring back information to their workplace or their own business?

**Monte:** Of course they were — and they worked really hard while attending the educational sessions. Why, we even had presenters at three different sessions and a new Associate Fellow. We have a lot of talented and energetic members in our chapter, you know!



**Phil:** Wow — I didn't realize all that. Monte, I'm so glad you got to go on this excursion. Is there anything else you would like to share with us about your trip?

**Monte:** Yes. Thank you, Tricia, for bringing me along. And thanks to all the NEO STC chapter members for spending time with me! Can't wait to see you all at the chapter meeting in September!

### Monkeys, members, and modular documentation

*By Tricia Spayer*

A wonderful impression was made on me as I made my first walk towards the convention center and Reading Terminal Market. Philadelphia had "Welcome STC" banners hanging from their posts all along the street in front of the convention center. The governor of Pennsylvania also came to the opening of the Expo, and taught us what a real Philly cheese steak is. I felt very welcomed in this city of brotherly love.

I would say that I enjoyed this conference more than any other. Mostly, it was due to the camaraderie and connections made outside the sessions. Our NEO STC chapter members who attended the conference went to lunches together, dinner, and seemed to meet up often at the exhibitor hall. This was great, because during chapter meetings, we don't often have as much time to network and get to know each other. We also met new members, as well as members who live too far from Cleveland to attend regular chapter meetings. We also welcomed other STC members who did not have fellow chapter members at the conference. I also made connections with STC International-level leaders, and felt their energy and passion for the society and technical communication. This renewed my enthusiasm for both the profession and STC.

At the Reading Terminal Market just outside the convention center, the Flying Monkey Patisserie and Profi's Creperie have also left an impression on me (great brownies and wonderful crepes)! Our group met every day for lunch in the seating area surrounding the Flying Monkey. With Monte joining us (the unofficial NEO STC mascot — a little stuffed monkey that travels with me), we had a nice monkey theme going. That kind of sums up the atmosphere among us.

Yes, I did attend education sessions as well. My favorite was titled "Editing Modular Documentation," presented by Michelle Corbin and Yoel Strimmling. I also found that other lone writers attended this session, hoping to glean

some help. The presenters were editors for large documentation departments. They provided several best practices for editing in general, and also editing modular documentation. Following are some tips I learned:

- ◆ There are three basic topic types: concept, task, and reference. The editors recommended that topic types cannot be mixed. That is, no concept information in a task topic, and so on.
- ◆ Topics must be standalone — we cannot assume someone has already read another piece of information.
- ◆ Topics titles cannot be the same.
- ◆ Topics cannot be too long.

The benefit of this presentation to lone writers was that, since we do not have an editor to check all these things, we should turn this information around and make it our best practices for writing topics.

To find out more, you can download the presentation materials from Michelle Corbin at the following location: <http://www.stc.org/edu/55thConf/index.asp>

### Handy hint: "Indent to Here" in InDesign or Quark

*By Lisa Mileusnich (lmileusnich@parker.com)*

In Adobe InDesign or QuarkXPress, you can create a quick hanging indent for a drop cap or bulleted list.

The special "Indent to Here" character makes it easy. When you type this character in a text block, all remaining paragraph lines are indented to that point.

Quark and InDesign both use the same shortcut:

Macintosh: **<Command> + \ (backslash)**

Windows: **<Ctrl> + \ (backslash)**

In InDesign, you can also access this feature from the menu bar: **Type > Insert Special Character > Indent to Here.**

Note: The "Indent to Here" character is indicated by a dagger symbol when you turn on the hidden characters.

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



June 2008 • Volume 24 Issue 8

Page 15

### Madcap offers free webinars

For a list of webinars they are offering, see <http://www.madcapsoftware.com/training/livedemos.aspx>

Topics include product demos and moving from FrameMaker to Flare.

### Job news

[NOTE: As of 2014, employment resources have shifted to the chapter's LinkedIn presence. Please refer to the [current chapter website](#) for details.]

To see the current job openings for technical communicators at Rockwell Automation, see <http://www.rockwellautomation.com/careers/> and search for openings in the Mayfield Heights location.

If you are looking for a position, remember to check the NEO STC job site at [www.neostc.org/jobs/openings.php](http://www.neostc.org/jobs/openings.php)! Remember to update your résumé.

Employers: Job listings on the NEO STC web site are free and reach a targeted audience! See [neostc.org/jobs/](http://neostc.org/jobs/)

### Chapter reminders

#### 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.]

The NEO STC listserv is another way to stay connected with other NEO STC members. It's easy and it does not generate huge amounts of e-mail!

For information on subscribing, see [www.neostc.org/official/listserv.htm](http://www.neostc.org/official/listserv.htm)

#### Featured content: Premium page 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 business who 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.

### Lines & Letters information

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Love it? Hate it? Let us know! Contact us: [newsletter@neostc.org](mailto:newsletter@neostc.org)

#### 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](mailto:newsletter@neostc.org).

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