Lines & Letters

Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter

President's column: Lots of credit to go around

By denise.kadilak@blackbaud.com

As we kick off a new NEO STC season, I'd like to introduce the members of our 2009 – 2010 Executive Board. We have an incredible group of people who volunteered to help make this year another success.

- **Ginny Haas, Vice President.** Ginny helped get our committees in place and up and running for the 2009 – 2010 year. In addition, Ginny was a great help getting the chapter's five-quarter budget plan done and submitted to International last month.

- **Sarah Burke, Secretary.** Sarah keeps minutes at our very long board meetings, arranges thank-you notes and gifts for our various speakers, and tracks member volunteer points for our NEO STC awards.

- **Brian Smith, Treasurer.** Brian is responsible for tracking all chapter funds — collecting meeting dues, dealing with PayPal, making deposits, handing out reimbursements, and balancing the books.

- **Amy Vogt, Immediate Past President.** Amy helped Ginny and me get the committees in place and she provides us guidance as we try to maneuver through our new chapter responsibilities.

I would also like to mention and thank all our committee members. Although the committees have been in place for only a couple months, all have gotten off to a fast start, with members bringing lots of good ideas and energy to the positions.

- **Academic Relations:** Sarah Burke (co-chair), Jeanette Evans (co-chair)
- **Bylaws:** Tricia Spayer (chair)
- **Competitions:** Lori Newman (chair), Denise Kadilak
- **Education:** Ginny Haas (co-chair Webinars), Kim Lindsey (co-chair Workshops)
- **Employment:** Paul Hanrahan (chair), Lisa Mileusnich
- **Memberships:** Julie Mason (co-chair), Sharon Jendrisak (co-chair)
- **Newsletter:** Barb Philbrick (chair), Jeanette Evans
- **Networking Lunches:** Angie Dianetti (co-chair), Jill McCauslin (co-chair)

- **Programs:** Lynn Nickels (co-chair), Paulette Henning (co-chair), Kris Henige (printed programs), Candace Wintering (Webmaster for Programs)
- **Public Relations:** Janean Voss
- **Social:** Amy Vogt
- **Sponsorships:** Robert Young (chair), and Jean Church
- **Webmaster:** Paul Holland

I want to thank you all!

October workshop: Employability: Achieving your career goals

This full-day seminar will take place Saturday, October 24, in the Mavis Winkle Auditorium in Independence.

An exciting slate of top-notch speakers will present on a variety of employment-related topics.

Beth Wilson, Career Counselor with the Cuyahoga County Public, Maple Heights Library Career Center. Beth will discuss the latest trends for résumés and cover letters. How can you make yours stand out and still be computer scannable? Beth brings to us the considerable resources of CCPL's Career Center (formerly InfoPLACE), a nationally-recognized free employment service.

Patricia Coyne, Program Developer in Career Development at the Cuyahoga Valley Career Center. She will discuss behavioral interviewing — two words that strike fear in the heart of job seekers everywhere. But there is a way to prepare for the challenge and ace the interview! Patricia will help you plan in advance and practice how to "work the plan."

Camille Tillman, Independent Online Marketing Professional and Career Consultant at Lee Hecht Harrison. You have posted your résumé on NEO STC and Monster —- now what? Should you start a blog? Is your LinkedIn profile as good as it could be? Camille's popular session on promoting yourself online will help you make the right choices about personal branding.

Danielle Turcola, President of Professionalism International, Inc. Ever wonder what kind of first impression you make on others? Or if there is a way you can better control what they see? A popular national speaker and business coach, Danielle will lead us in an interactive session on developing a business presence that can contribute to both personal and business success.

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Who will benefit from this workshop?

♦ Members in transition who want an edge in their job search

♦ Consultants, independent contractors and freelancers looking to polish their image

♦ Anyone planning for a career move or promotion

Through the month of September, registration will be open to NEO STC members only. After October 1, registration will be opened up to non-members. See http://www.neostc.org/calendar/20091024.html to register online.

Upcoming events

NEO STC events

Unless otherwise noted, see NEO STC website for detail about an event.

♦ 9/20/09: Social networking: Biking on the tow path and dinner at Winking Lizard (621 Main St. Peninsula, OH 44264, 330-657-2209). Meet at Peninsula Century Cycles at 3 pm.

♦ 10/3/09: Social networking: Wine tasting and picnic at Wolf Creek Winery. 3:30 pm. 2637 S. Cleveland-Massillon Rd, Norton, OH 44203-6417, 800-436-0426

♦ 10/14/09: Networking lunch. Abuelo's Mexican Food Embassy, Warrensville Heights.

♦ 11/10/09: Cleveland InDesign User Group meeting. See http://www.indesignusergroup.com/chapters/cleveland/.

Other events of interest

♦ 9/23/09: Business and the media: "Managing the media evolution" presented by Jay Linden. See City Club of Cleveland website for more information.

♦ 9/24/09: Windows 7 from a user's perspective. Presented by Simplex-IT. See http://www.simplex-it.com for detail.

♦ 9/30/09: STC web seminar, The future of technical communication: Remix. See http://stc.org/edu/seminars01.asp

♦ 9/30/09: The future of print media. NOCA/One Industry forum. See The Plain Dealer online store.

♦ 9/30/09: Introduction to Adobe LiveCycle, Radcom, Inc. See

http://radcomservices.com/Services_Training_Offerings.htm

♦ 10/6/09: Customizing your Microsoft Sharepoint site, Radcom, Inc. See http://radcomservices.com/Services_Training_Offerings.htm

♦ 5/2 — 5/5/09: Technical Communication Summit 2010 in Dallas, Texas.

NEO STC wants your opinion!

The NEO STC Education Committee is working to bring Kevin Siegel, founder and president of IconLogic and author of 100s of computer training books, to town for a software Saturday Workshop this spring. To help us plan, we would like to know what training you are most interested in. Please click the education link below to take a short survey.

To help the NEO STC Employment Committee respond to the current job market, we would like to know where NEO STC members are in their careers. We also want to measure member awareness of the committee and solicit suggestions and comments. Please click the job survey link below to answer a brief 10-question survey about your job status and how the Employment Committee can provide value to members.

Your responses will be anonymous. *[Outdated links to education survey and job survey are deleted.]*

NEO STC 2009-2010 Competition: Call for entries

Have you or your company produced technical communication products that you think are worthy of awards? Would you like your work to be recognized by your peers? This call for entries is your invitation to participate in the following Society for Technical Communication (STC) competitions being held by the Northeast Ohio (NEO) chapter:

♦ Online communication

♦ Technical publications

♦ Technical art

The deadline for both competitions is October 14, 2009.

Who is eligible?

Anyone is eligible to submit entries. You do not have to be a member of STC. You may enter work as an individual or on behalf of a colleague or subordinate.

What can be entered?

Entries in all categories must contain sufficient technical, scientific, medical, or similar content to qualify as technical communication.

Entries must have been produced or substantially revised within 24 months before September 1, 2009.

Entries must have been originally prepared for and accepted for publication by a client, employer, or publisher.

Entries are subject to all restrictions listed in the General Information and Competition Rules.

How are the competitions structured?

NEO STC's competitions recognize and encourage excellence in online communication and technical publications. STC offers two levels of competition:

- Local and regional competitions. Local and regional competitions are the first level of competition. A local competition is one held by a single chapter. A regional competition is one held by two or more chapters, usually in the same STC region. NEO STC is not participating in a regional competition, so the first level will be local.

- The international competitions. The international competitions are the second and final level of competition. Winners of the Distinguished Technical Communication award and Excellence award in each category of each local and regional competition qualify for submission to the appropriate international competition. The committee will contact you if your entry is chosen for entry in the international competition.

What awards are given?

- One Best of Show award is presented for each competition. At the local level, three levels of recognition are awarded in each competition category. These awards, in descending order, are:

- Distinguished Technical Communication (DTC). Clearly superior in all areas, an outstanding entry that anticipates and fulfills the needs of its audience.

- Excellence. Meets high standards in all areas, an entry that demonstrates exceptional understanding of technical communication principles.

- Merit. Meets high standards in most areas, an entry that applies technical communication principles in a proficient manner.

The committee presents awards based on STC's judging criteria. Every entry submitted may not receive an award.

Winners of the Distinguished Technical Communication, Excellence, and Best of Show awards in each category qualify for automatic submission to STC's international competitions. At the international level, the awards structure is the same as our local level awards.

Who sees my entry and what happens to it?

In addition to being reviewed by judges, your entry may be displayed to other STC members and the general public. For example, STC, Northeast Ohio and many other chapters display entries at their annual awards banquet.

Entries that win an award at the international competition level may become part of a traveling exhibit.

Deadlines, fees, and how to submit

- The deadline for the NEO STC chapter competitions is October 14th, 2009. No more than three authors/entrants for each submission.

- For each submission, complete the Entry and Description forms. These forms are available on http://www.neostc.org/.

- On the Entry form's Chapter Sponsoring Competition line, enter Northeast Ohio Chapter. On both the Entry and Description forms, indicate which competition you are entering as well as the category that best fits the entry. Categories are listed and described in the instructions for the Entry form.

- Submitter's Signature on the Entry Form: This must be an actual signature. STC will accept electronic signatures. If you choose to email the Entry Form, print the form, sign it and scan it as an attachment to your email.

- If your entry was produced under unusual conditions (such as a very tight deadline or very limited budget), note them on the Description form.

- If you want to disclaim responsibility for a portion of your entry, or if you want to draw the judges' attention some aspect of it, use the Description form. (Judges are not obligated to consider any of these comments in evaluating your entry.)

- On the Description form, be sure to include relevant installation instructions, purpose, audience, tools used to develop the entry, and any other information relevant to evaluating it.

♦ If you are submitting your entry on physical media, attach one set of the Entry form and Description to each copy of the entry media. Media for Online Communications: All online entries must be submitted as a URL or on a CD. (If your entry is a web site available online, consider entering it on physical media anyway in case the judges experience connection problems.)

Send four copies of each entry with the attached Entry and Description forms (do not inlcude payment with your entry) to:

> Lori Neuman
>
> Rockwell Automation
>
> 1 Allen Bradley Drive
>
> Mayfield Heights, OH 44273
>
> Telephone: 440.646.3160
>
> Email: Lneuman@ra.rockwell.com.

Costs:

♦ $75.00 STC members

♦ $95.00 non-members

♦ $60.00 students

♦ $50 for all technical art entries (International STC is not accepting technical art entries, so any submissions will be judged only at the chapter level.)

If a product is entered into more than one competition, a separate entry fee must be paid for each entry.

To pay by check, make the check payable to NEO STC with "2009-2010 Competition Entry" in the message portion of the check. You can also pay online using a credit card. The online payment option will be available later this week on http://www.neostc.org/.

Questions?

Contact Lori Neuman or Denise Kadilak.

You be the judge! 2009 NEO STC competition judges needed

The Society for Technical Communication invites you to serve as a judge for the Northeast Ohio Chapter's 2009-20010 Competitions. This is your opportunity to contribute to the evolving definition of quality for technical communication. Share your expertise, see the best examples of our craft, and make new contacts in the field!

What will I do as a judge?

♦ Participate in a training session for all judges

♦ Receive entries and instructions

♦ Review and evaluate the entries with your assigned team before the consensus meeting. Some options for corresponding with your team include: E-mail, conference call (or three-way calling), meeting with your team before consensus judging

♦ Attend the consensus meeting to wrap up any additional discussion regarding entries and evaluations, turn in scoring materials and evaluate and select Best of Show entries

Judging schedule

♦ Thursday, Oct. 22nd — Judges' training and distribution of entries. We will plan a little party at Bar Louie in Legacy Village. STC will provide the appetizers, plus it is happy hour — the drinks are cheap!

♦ Thursday, Nov. 16th — Consensus meeting at Rockwell Automation from 6 to 9 pm. A deli tray will be served.

What are the requirements for becoming a judge?

♦ Be nice and fun-loving

♦ Be able to perform judging tasks as a member of a team

♦ Have the time to complete the judging within the time frame of the competition (about three weeks)

♦ Be able to attend the meetings on Oct. 15th and Nov. 12th

What types of judges are needed?

Lead judges: Lead judges evaluate entries as part of a team of two to three judges. The teams evaluate the entries in a specific category. As a judge, you and your teammates will evaluate entries, fill out a scoring sheet, and provide comments. Guidelines for how to judge the entries will be explained at the Judges training session, when the entries will be distributed to all judges.

Online communication judges: It is recommended that you have experience as a user or producer of online communication, and access to an Intel-based or Macintosh personal computer with Internet access to evaluate entries before the consensus meeting. If you

have access to a laptop, we encourage you bring it with you to the consensus judging event.

Technical publications judges: You should have experience as a user or producer of technical publication communication.

Technical art judges: You should have experience as a user or producer of technical art communication.

How do I become a judge?

Complete a simple application form. The form will be provided to all individuals who volunteer.

You may judge in one competition only.

Contact Lori Neuman (lneuman@ra.rockwell.com).

The talk of the town

Tricia Spayer recently received the Competent Communicator (CC) award at her Swagelok Impact Toastmasters club. This means she completed her first 10 communication projects, and achieved this first level of success. She plans to continue through the Advanced Communication projects, and is currently working through the Competent Leader projects.

Paul Hanrahan is an online book seller. Rather than selling his writing to others, he is selling other people's writing. He appears as MythReal Enterprises on Amazon and Alibris dot com.

Lisa Mileusnich won(?) the Dishonorable Mention in the 2009 Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest. See her entry at http://www.bulwer-lytton.com/2009.htm.

Meeting review: Introduction to Second Life

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

Over 40 people attended our August meeting at Bar Louie. This joint meeting with ASTD featured Dr. Pamela Mitchell of Kent State. Her presentation provided an introduction to Second Life, including registration, selecting and modifying an avatar, navigation, communication, basic editing, and building. Pamela also conducted a tour of selected areas of interest in Second Life with a focus on teaching applications.

Second Life is the virtual world developed by Linden Lab. It launched on June 23, 2003, and is accessible via the Internet. A free client program called the Second Life Viewer allows users to interact with each other through avatars. Users can explore, meet other users, socialize, participate in individual and group activities, and create and trade virtual property and services with one another, and more in this virtual world.

Dr. Mitchell is a tenured Associate Professor in the School of Health Sciences at Kent State University. She has been involved with technology applications since the 80's, and has developed expertise and experience in virtual worlds such as Second Life since 2006. She has conducted numerous presentations and trainings in the use of virtual worlds, and has developed case studies, simulations and assistive technology to improve learning and problem solving. Her work in virtual worlds has been featured in the Kent State magazine, Ohio magazine, and Second Life events.

Book review: *WordPress for Dummies*

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

WordPress for Dummies. Lisa Sabin-Wilson, author. Foreward by Matt Mullenweg, co-founder of WordPress. 2nd Edition. 2009. ISBN-10: 0470149469. List price US$24.99. Used from $7.68. New from $9.05 (from http://www.Amazon.com).

Reading this book is a good way to learn more about WordPress and how to use the tool for various blog applications. The book goes beyond what is on WordPress.org and helped me when I wanted to learn more about WordPress after using the Google blogspot.com utility (for a simple newsletter I write for a local environmental group). I wondered, in part, if this book would help me understand if I should switch to WordPress.

Reviews on Amazon for *WordPress for Dummies* show feedback from 50 customers with about half giving the book the top rating. To be fair, the folks who gave the book a poorer rating had interesting things to say. However, I would give the book a high rating.

Author Lisa Sabin does a good job explaining her topics. In fact, the book is now in its second edition, which says to me that the first edition was obviously successful. Within about a dozen pages into the book, I learned part of what I wanted to know, which was that WordPress provides a way to set up a blog for free. WordPress also has a way to easily tie into feeds and provide statistics. This is all good to know and explained well in the book.

The book also explains interesting bits of information about professional blogging including how advertisers pay bloggers to make blog posts about products. Darren Rowse's ProBlogger blog at http://problogger.net

explains more and is a good resource on this topic, as explained in this book.

Overall, *WordPress for Dummies* achieves its advertised goal of addressing a target audience at virtually any level from beginner to experienced. The book explains much to someone who has never blogged. It also explains much to experienced bloggers who might want to migrate from another blog utility or want to use more of advanced features of WordPress.

Some of the topics covered in the book include how to sign up for a free WordPress account, set up a hosted blog, install WordPress MU software for multi-user versions, deal with spam, and add technologies such as RSS feeds. If you are interested in these types of topics, you could find the book helpful.

In the spotlight: Paul Hanrahan

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

Paul Hanrahan was invited to be a member of the NEO STC Employment Committee in May of 2008. He recently became chair of that committee. Concerning his involvement with STC, Paul notes, "I spent years authoring material in the software development and support industry. I had joined a number of organizations that focused on the industry I was in, computer manufacturing and software development, when it occurred to me that I should also be involved in an organization that focused on my profession. About the time I decided to focus more on writing about software than actually writing it, one of the staff at Cleveland State University's Career Services center recommended I get involved with the Society for Technical Communications in late 2007. I joined NEO STC in February 2008. I attended NEO STC networking lunches, seminars and meetings regularly to become familiar with the organization and to develop relationships with other writing professionals in the area."

About his educational background, Paul explains, "I spent my first two years as an under graduate in the English program at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio. During my sophomore year as an English major my interest in literature broadened to an interest in how writers influenced current events. I transferred to Cleveland State University's Communication program to satisfy my interest in journalism, mass media and the analysis of their affects. In the spring of 1977 I received a B.A. in communications from CSU with an emphasis on using programming packages to perform statistical analysis of communications behavior. I entered a

graduate degree program in communications at the University of Iowa in the fall of 1977 where I taught freshman rhetoric for a year. I left the graduate program after a year to pursue a career and raise a family."

As for his professional background, Paul says, "I joined IBM in June of 1979 where I worked as a writer and software developer for fifteen years. At IBM, I wrote business cases, programming specifications and later contributed to external publications meant for both engineers writing third party software and direct users of our software and hardware. At IBM, I was a Staff Software Developer, Information Development Coordinator and team leader. After leaving IBM in 1994, I have spent the last fifteen years mostly as a contractor/consultant writing programming specifications, business procedures, user manuals, and newsletters, as well as doing software development and maintenance. In the 2005 — 2007 time frame I began to transition from developer and writer to strictly communications and writing projects."

Paul's impressive professional experience includes website construction and moderation. He was moderator for eleven regional messages boards for the Programmers Guild and a significant contributor to design and construction of www.towercity.com. In addition, he did website design and construction for National City Corporation and design and development of website content including art work and text.

His background includes being editor and publisher of The Programming Profession, a newsletter for information technology professionals that discusses writing specifications, estimates, and plans for the modernization of engineering and job costing software for Benette Dover Construction. He has also authored invention disclosures for the IBM Technical Disclosure Bulletin. For Case Western Reserve University, he wrote plans and specifications for a software library and configuration management system.

In addition, Paul lectured at the Midwest VM Regional User's Group convention and taught taught classes to operations personnel on network operation, problem determination, and recovery. He also participated in mentoring program at IBM to assist other professionals in attaining career goals and provided educational presentations on new releases and upgrades of products to customers and developers.

Some of Paul's other achievements are that he generated, developed, and presented proposals to senior management along with recommended solutions

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to problems reported; produced business cards, pamphlets, flyers, and CD covers for various approximately 100 organizations while a desktop publisher; produced, as part of a team, a press release for a professional organization, acted as media interface and representative for a professional organization by providing interviews to the press, and created distribution kits for new software product for Fallon Industries.

Currently living in Lakewood with his wife and daughters, Paul's hobbies and interests include martial arts, book collecting, and running a small home-based business.

Winners of our membership drive

For the second year in a row, the NEO STC won the membership renewal drive sponsored by the international STC. Along with this win came a number of great prizes that we decided to raffle. All renewing 2009/2010 members were included in the drawing, and we are pleased to announce our winners:

- Carrie Fetkovick: Insignia 19" HDTV
- Kathleen Ruggeri: Epson Stylus NX215 Printer/Copier/Scanner
- Cheryl Drake: $50 Amazon Gift Card
- Anne Paczula: $50 Amazon Gift Card

Of interest

To participate in discussions about improving STC, join STC Ideas. To join, on the national STC website, click the link Get your invitation to the STC Ideas Network.

Freelance writing rates: http://www.writingassistance.com/pdfs/WAIFreelanceRateChart_V1.1.pdf

STC offers four online courses where participants can earn a certificate. The courses are divided into 90-minute sessions and presented live online over five to eight weeks. STC certificate program let you explore a subject in-depth over the course of several weeks. In addition to the practical work skills that you will develop, participating in a certificate program provides you with a unique live opportunity to learn directly from an instructor and to also exchange ideas and tools virtually with the other participants in the program. See http://www.stc.org/edu/online-certificate-courses.asp for detail.

Chapter reminders

Are you following STC on Twitter yet?

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.

Join NEO STC on LinkedIn

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

Join our LinkedIn Group on http://www.LinkedIn.com (you must be a member of LinkedIn, which is free for a basic membership). FYI : There will be waiting period while your membership is approved.

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

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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

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.