

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



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### President's column

In February, I had the privilege of addressing technical communication students at Cedarville University in southwestern Ohio.

One of the subjects normally covered in their "Technical Communicators in Corporate Culture" class is how we typically interact with others in a business setting. I touched on getting information from SMEs and making your boss look good, as well as sharing my own perspectives on tolerance.

You see, I've come to the realization that tolerance is not enough. How do you like to be tolerated? Feels like condescension, doesn't it?

No, tolerance isn't enough - we've got to respect people.

This is more than just respecting their right to be different: I wish we could actually respect people as themselves. I believe you don't have to agree with someone to respect them and that you can respect someone with whom you have nothing in common. Probably, there are very few people you couldn't respect, at least a little, even when there's nothing to be gained by it.

But this respect has to be for real: People know when you respect them, and they can always tell when you don't.

The hardest part is that so much of our culture, especially the humor, is based on ridicule and disrespect. Think about it. I was amazed when I started considering this myself. It's almost totally monolithic.

Those of you who know me, know that I could never give up my sense of humor. On the other hand, showing even a tiny bit of respect can't help but stand out in our current context. You don't have to be patronizing or a goody-two-shoes: just looking someone in the eyes and saying a sincere "thank you" can elicit amazement.

If I enjoy the differences between others and myself, because there is no shortage of differences, that means there's a lot of joy too.

Thanks for tolerating my "rant" - hope to see you at this month's meeting!

~ Kim Lindsey

### Meeting April 14: Using Arbortext software for single sourcing

Arbortext is the leading global provider of enterprise publishing software that allows you to create and automatically publish information to multiple types of media, including Web, print, CD-ROM, and wireless.

Our speakers, **Daniel Curry** and **Mike Muha** of Arbortext, will demonstrate how their XML-based technology builds a single, media-neutral source of information that can be automatically assembled and published for any audience on any medium.

See you on the 14th!

We'll be meeting at the Holiday Inn, 6001 Rockside Road, Independence.

For more information, including preregistration, see <http://www.neostc.org/calendar/20050414.html>.

**Mark your calendar:** Our final meeting of the 2004-05 year will be the chapter awards and recognition dinner on Friday, May 20.

**Bring your business card to enter a drawing! This month's prize is a free May meeting.**

### Upcoming events

- ◆ 4/15/2005: STC annual election closes at noon.
- ◆ 4/20/2005: Networking luncheon at Rockne's in Streetsboro
- ◆ 4/20/2005: Phone seminar: Magical Numbers\*
- ◆ 4/22/2005: Last day to register for the STC's 52nd Annual Conference at the advance rates.
- ◆ 5/8/2005 - 5/11/2005: International Conference in Seattle, WA.
- ◆ 5/20/2005: Annual Chapter Awards Banquet

\* **Note that the chapter is not sponsoring these seminars.** If you would like to host a seminar, please e-mail us.

### March meeting wrap-up: Translation for technical communicators

by Barbara Philbrick (*caslon@alltel.net*)

March's speaker, Georgia Roeming, with help from GEO Group associate and NEO STC member Mario Morelos, talked about preparing communications projects for translation and gave us some tips on working with translation companies.

Congratulations to Alex Kelemen, our free meeting winner for March!

One of the important concepts she discussed was a translation memory (TM). This is a database of terms specific to your company or industry, along with its defined translation. By working with a translation company to create a translation memory, you can save costs for future translations.

She also discussed bringing the translation team in early in the process, even though they (ideally) will not work on documents until they are finalized. By bringing the translation team in early, you can make some decisions about items such as how and whether metric measures will be used, what names will be used in examples, and determining what terms will stay in English (for example, product names and new devices that do not have good translations).

She also presented some general guidelines when preparing for translation:

- ◆ Leave 20 to 35% more white space than you would in an English-only document. The importance of extra white space depends on how important it is to keep page counts the same.
- ◆ Pull callouts into the desktop publishing package (do not leave them embedded in a graphic).
- ◆ Avoid idioms.
- ◆ Use visuals wherever possible.
- ◆ Write for reuse; don't use different terms for the same thing.

Georgia is an Owner/Partner of The GEO Group, which is headquartered in Madison, Wisconsin, with offices in Chicago, Ohio, and the Twin Cities. The Geo Group provides translation, interpretation, desktop publishing, audio/video services, Web site localization, and technical writing in virtually every language.

### Congratulations to new senior STC members!

Our new senior members are Elizabeth Estep, Amy Schade, and Lori Tamburro!

### NEO STC presents the candidates for 2005-2006 offices

By Lori Klepfer (*ljklepfer@core.com*), NEO STC Immediate Past President

Continuing the tradition of strong leadership, the Nominating Committee is pleased to present the slate of candidates for NEO STC offices for term July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006.

- ◆ President: Robert Young
- ◆ Vice-President\*: Stephanie Webster
- ◆ Treasurer: Heidi Emhoff Fronheiser
- ◆ Secretary: Tricia Spayer
- ◆ Immediate Past President: Kim Lindsey

\*The Vice-President candidate becomes NEO STC President the following year.

Since the positions are uncontested at this time, the Nominating Committee respectfully submits this list for membership approval. Barring any opposition or new candidates by April 30th, these officers will be the 2005-2006 NEO STC Board and will be introduced at the May meeting.

Should you wish to express your dissent with regard to any candidate or wish to run for any office, except for President and Immediate Past President, please contact Lori Klepfer (*ljklepfer@core.com* or 440-605-9463). In the case of a contested position, ballots will be prepared and mailed to current members.

### Congratulations to our annual drawing winners!

Congratulations to Namrata Malik, Monica Lusk, and Stephanie Webster for winning the NEO STC annual drawing!

In the past, we featured a drawing for an annual conference registration. This year, we offered one of three prizes to three people instead. The prizes are:

- ◆ paid STC membership for the next year
- ◆ 6 free meetings during the 2005-2006 season

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- ◆ \$150 gift certificate to Borders

Members' names were put in the hat based on how they participated in the chapter this year. Members receive an entry each time they:

- ◆ attend a meeting
- ◆ attend a networking lunch
- ◆ attend a webinar
- ◆ are on a committee, plus one extra for being a committee chair
- ◆ get an article published in Lines & Letters
- ◆ serve in another capacity, such as the rechartering effort

Next year, we hope to go back to offering at least one conference registration, once the dust has settled from the Transformation and we see where we stand.

### Volunteer opportunities for next year

*By Lori Klepfer (ljklepfer@core.com), NEO STC Immediate Past President*

April is volunteer appreciation month, so I would like to take a moment to thank all those who volunteer their time to STC, both present and past. Our society would not be the strong, international association of professionals that it is without the countless hours spent each year at all levels world-wide.

At NEO STC, leadership and committee contributors spend many hours providing member services and keeping our community vital. Members spend a few minutes to a few hours each month. While no position is paid, those serving NEO STC reap many benefits: long-lasting business and personal relationships, honed skills, and development of entirely new skills.

NEO STC cannot remain vital without you, and you can increase the value of your membership experience by contributing to the NEO STC Community. We are seeking Committee Chairs for the following committees:

- ◆ Programs
- ◆ Marketing/PR
- ◆ Membership
- ◆ CIC-SIG

In addition, the following committees would welcome your contributions:

- ◆ Programs
- ◆ Marketing/PR
- ◆ Membership
- ◆ Employment
- ◆ Newsletter

To discuss opportunities and how you can contribute your skills to NEO STC, please contact any NEO STC board member:

- ◆ Kim Lindsey (klindsey@parker.com)
- ◆ Lori Klepfer (ljklepfer@core.com)
- ◆ Bob Young (bobyong@maximus.com)
- ◆ Trish Spayer (tspayer@pressco.com)
- ◆ Ken Rogers (drken@adelphia.net)

We'll be happy to share our experience with you and help you achieve your goals by contributing your skills to NEO STC.

### STC helps member achieve Best of Show

*By Bob Young (bobyong@maximus.com)*

My STC membership is a big factor in my winning this year's NEO STC Best of Show Award for the publications division. Attending the monthly meetings, seminars and conferences has provided me with a wealth of information that I try to weave into every document I write.

In fact, soon after joining Juris, Inc., now MAXIMUS, I learned at an STC meeting about a one-day seminar on the keys to technical writing. The instructor at this seminar emphasized white space, placement of graphics, and consistent instructions that can be easily understood. All three elements are important, especially the latter, in my work: writing judicial software for an audience with varied courtroom experience.

Addressing the needs of our audience was one of the challenges when the decision was made to write a separate manual on our Supreme Court reports. These elaborate reports are required to be sent each month to state authorities to track the types of crimes that have occurred and to ensure the judges' caseloads are appropriate. Previously, we had summarized the information in a chapter of our Case Management

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manual, one of 26 books comprising our CourtView documentation.

Because we have to deal with six states using different electronic forms, I decided to chunk the relevant information per state in its own section. Codes and parameters that all the states use to set up the forms are reviewed in the first two chapters. Feedback from our clients has been positive because they can immediately turn to the chapter that applies to their state's requirements.

The In-Court manual (the second submission of the documentation set) provides instructions for court clerks to enter docket information during the actual court proceeding. To help the clerks keep pace with the testimony, the entering of evidence, and the scheduling, I chose to present the documentation in the same manner in which the clerks use the software.

Clicking a tab at the top of the screen accesses each entry screen for the appropriate court task. The instructions for the court tasks are presented in the same tab position so the clerk can quickly access the information if a question arises. The tabs are easily identified in the sub-headings in the scholar's margin at the left side.

The margins, fonts, and headings are used in a pre-formatted FrameMaker template. An NEO STC member I met through our local meetings, Angie Dianetti, provided our FrameMaker training. Another example of the value of STC membership! We set up Framemaker to create single-sourced documentation that is converted into a hyperlinked PDF manual using Adobe Acrobat 6.0.

All of these modifications to our InCourt manual, which I made based on the one-day seminar and the many STC meetings I've attended, have resulted in a more user friendly, more usable manual for my clients.

### Seattle conference provides unique opportunities

*by Suzanna Laurent, STC First Vice President, Associate Fellow, Oklahoma Chapter*

Experiencing Technical Communication, STC's 52nd Annual Conference, will be held May 8 to 11, 2005, in Seattle, Washington. More detail is available at the official conference site at <http://www.stc.org/52ndConf>.

How long has it been since you updated the knowledge and skills you use to perform your work? If you lost your job right now, would your present skills be sufficient to

land a new one? What have you learned recently about the emerging trends in technical communication? Plan now to attend the world's largest gathering of technical communicators in Seattle, May 8-11, to take advantage of the opportunities STC provides to learn new job skills, network with other professionals, and enjoy demonstrations of new products useful to your work. As STC members, we receive these and other benefits in a variety of ways, but it is up to us to take advantage of the many opportunities offered. You may be one of those members whose employer still pays for training at a conference such as this, but I've only experienced that a couple of times in my almost 20 years in the profession. Nevertheless, because I know the importance of keeping my knowledge and skills up-to-date, attending the annual conference is an investment I make in myself every year. I believe it helps to ensure my future!

The annual conference helps members further their education and expand their network of contacts. Over 200 technical sessions offer technical communicators — from entry level to senior management — opportunities to improve their technical skills and personal development. Session topics are categorized under Usability and Information Design; Management; Professional Development; Theory, Research, Education and Training; Tools and Technology; and Writing and Editing.

There are many other opportunities at the conference as well. You can meet new friends, renew old acquaintances, learn about technological advances, review employment opportunities around the world, and try the latest software solutions to your work-related problems. You can hear motivational speakers and view the international competition award winners. A special event is the Honors Banquet where you can meet STC Fellows, Associate Fellows, and learn which communities won the coveted Achievement and Pacesetter awards for outstanding achievement. Optional events include post-conference tutorials and workshops, and a variety of SIG meetings and networking luncheons. Sample Seattle's hospitality by taking one of the special tours available. And, don't forget to leave time to visit the STC Bookstore. In all, there are four days of educational presentations, vendor exhibits, and social events, including a full day of leadership training. You will receive a copy of the conference Proceedings as well. I often refer to my copies of past proceedings when seeking information on a particular topic.

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When you divide the number of educational sessions you can attend into the registration cost, you will find it is an inexpensive way to further your education, and it is tax deductible. Continuing your education shows employers that you are interested in improving yourself and that you are not content to just do your job without taking the initiative to learn more and stay up-to-date with the emerging trends.

Plan the sessions you want to attend well in advance, mixing personal and professional development topics with other seminars that relate directly to your interests to get the most "bang for your buck." Delivered with the March 2005 issue of Intercom was a comprehensive conference program guide. It is a great source of pre-conference information. Also available at [www.stc.org/52ndConf](http://www.stc.org/52ndConf) is more information on sessions, tours, and events for the annual conference.

If you would like help getting support from your employer to attend this conference, visit [www.stc.org/52ndConf/PDF/getting.support.pdf](http://www.stc.org/52ndConf/PDF/getting.support.pdf) to read some great tips. No matter how you get there, you will return with information and ideas that will contribute to your growth and advancement as a technical communicator. Start planning now to take advantage of this marvelous opportunity offered by STC at its next annual conference!

Reduced rates are available to participants who register on or before April 22nd via the Web, mail, or fax. The rates listed on the registration form are in U.S. dollars. Participants may also register onsite at the conference at a more expensive rate.

For me, this will be an especially memorable conference as I will be installed at the annual business meeting on Tuesday, May 10, as the Society's 2005-2006 president. This is a goal I've worked toward for many years, and I hope you will be there to cheer me on as I take over the leadership of our international organization that provides unique educational and networking opportunities. I guarantee you that I can see some exciting things in STC's future!

### Reminder: Deadline for voting is April 15

The annual STC election is ending soon. If you would like to review candidate profiles, see [http://www.stc.org/intercom/PDFs/2005/200503\\_29-39.pdf](http://www.stc.org/intercom/PDFs/2005/200503_29-39.pdf).

If you have not received a ballot, please contact Anita Dosik ([anita@stc.org](mailto:anita@stc.org)).

### Helpline: Creating icons

Thanks to Kim Lindsey for passing along this web site about creating icons:

<http://www.simplebits.com/notebook/2004/08/23/anatomy.html>

### Hot jobs

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

Every month, we highlight a few of the job listings from the NEO STC job site (<http://www.neostc.org/jobs/index.htm>).

- ◆ Pressco Technology Inc. is seeking a Marketing Communication Specialist who will develop, distribute, and coordinate all presentation materials and external marketing communications.
- ◆ Penton Media is seeking an editor in chief for HPAC Engineering. The editor-in-chief will determine and direct a magazine's content.
- ◆ The Weatherhead School of Management is seeking a Director of Marketing and Communications who will contribute to the success and reputation of Case Weatherhead School of Management by serving as a lead communications professional for the Center and who will to drive school-wide enrollment and increase revenue.
- ◆ Great Lakes Publishing is seeking a Graphic Designer for Ohio Magazine.
- ◆ National City Corporation in Brecksville is seeking a Training and Development Specialist to facilitate instruction for small and large audiences in interpersonal, technical, and professional development courses, as well as in operational knowledge and specialized job functions.
- ◆ Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine is seeking a webmaster.
- ◆ Ben Venue Laboratories is seeking a technical writer to develop Master Batch Production Records (MBPR) for parenteral pharmaceuticals.
- ◆ University Hospitals Health System is seeking a Technical Writer/Trainer.
- ◆ Jo-Ann Stores in Hudson is seeking an Intern - Information Systems.

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- ◆ DATATRAK is seeking a Learning Solutions Specialist.
- ◆ Tooling University (Jergens, Inc.) is seeking a Technical Writer/Content Developer to write original training materials for web-based classes on a variety of industrial topics.

If your company has a job opening, let Sarah Burke ([sarahwilsonburke@hotmail.com](mailto:sarahwilsonburke@hotmail.com)) or Nams Malik ([nmalik@software.rockwell.com](mailto:nmalik@software.rockwell.com)) know. Job listings on the NEOSTC web site are free and reach a targeted audience!