

Lines & Letters

Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



September 2005 • Volume 22 Issue 1

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President's column: Our goals are taking shape!

By Bob Young (Ryoung1956@sbcglobal.net)

Last May, I had the opportunity to discuss some goals for the coming year as incoming president. Just a few months later some of these initiatives are in place while others, such as improving our membership base, are taking shape.

The quick response is due to the hard work and unselfish time given by your officers and committee members. These dedicated volunteers have been meeting throughout the summer to formulate exciting plans with one overriding goal: providing service to you, the member. This topic has received a lot of discussion during the transformation and at STC conferences. Now is the time for delivering on the message.

So, what can you expect this year as a member of NEO STC? Plenty!

Some of the changes this year will be subtle, such as the revamped chapter logo, a new member letter, and a meeting program, which enables us to provide some publicity for the companies who support our profession and our members.

All of these items are part of a broader goal of marketing ourselves to reach out to the community to broaden our membership base. We already have taken strides to communicate the many positives this organization has to offer by calling former and non-active members. The telephone campaign was the first attempt to remind members of the advantage of having a network pipeline to prospective employers. Obviously, being a member does not guarantee you a job, but it does help you associate with a diverse group of professionals who have a committee designed to provide the "hottest" jobs available. The Employment Committee has been working to improve its service by launching a jobs database and distributing an electronic form letter to employers who have openings. Hopefully this letter will encourage employers to post their positions with us first.

A revitalized Public Relations Committee, meanwhile, has designed literature that explains our chapter's history and purpose to help us build upon our sustaining organizations. Sustaining organizations provide financial assistance to international, and, in turn, back to us. The PR Committee also is writing press releases to publicize our program lineup, which kicks off with Neil Perlin, a

widely respected STC presenter who is an expert with the last technologies.

Retention of our existing membership base is equally important. We are trying to offer a modest meeting price in this challenging economic climate while continuing to help our members increase their skill set. We plan to offer several STC webinars, beginning with two sessions on Dreamweaver in September. The two-part Dreamweaver sessions are free for members, but seating is on a first-come, first-serve basis. (See the chapter calendar for details at <http://www.neostc.org>.) The chapter pays for a webinar based on members' interest of the topic and availability of a host site.

Other noticeable changes will be the meeting location and food. We have a larger banquet room at the AmeriSuites on Jefferson Drive in Independence, and the food will be catered.

We plan to recognize all of our volunteers this year with a new program, which I will address at the first meeting and in this space next month.

There is a lot in motion. We hope you will join us and enjoy the ride!

Editor's column: Welcome back!

I hope everyone had a nice summer!

Over the summer, our chapter leaders have been getting organized for the coming year and have put some nice pieces in place for us.

This year, most of our meetings will be held at the AmeriSuites in Independence, with catering by Simon's. In addition, there will be a family event at the Great Lakes Science Center, and our holiday meeting will be at Hoggy's.

At our annual board meeting, we discussed our budget. We were glad to see that things had not changed for our chapter (there was some last year concern that the transformation effort would affect our funding). We are in the black and should be able to provide our normal chapter programs comfortably.

One of the pushes this year will be for increased membership. The PR Committee has already gotten a great start — our September meeting announcement was published in Crain's Cleveland Business in the August 18 issue. On August 24 and 25th, current members got together and called former members to encourage them to join us again.

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The employment committee is also doing outreach, trying to better connect with employers who hire technical communicators. It is starting to happen: as the job listings have increased, the number of employers who are listing jobs with us has also increased. You can help them out by letting your employers know that we offer a free job postings service for technical communication positions. To increase the value of our jobs pages on the web site, please remember to check out your resumes and add, update, or remove them from the site!

If you would like to see the full minutes of the board meeting, click here to open a PDF of them.

We have one committee that is not fulfilled yet. We need someone to run the competitions. If you are interested, please contact Bob Young (Ryoung1956@sbcglobal.net)

All-in-all, it looks like a great year is shaping up! We look forward to seeing you soon!

September meeting: What's Up, eDoc?

Join NEO STC at a new location as we kick off another exciting year with Neil Perlin, an internationally recognized expert and one of the most prominent speakers in our field.

The meeting will begin with a discussion of trends in technologies and tools and their effects on us as technical writers, including:

- ◆ Familiar technologies - Online help and HTML
- ◆ Short-term trends - Single sourcing, XML, and CMSs
- ◆ Long-term opportunities - Windows Vista (aka Longhorn), Macromedia Flash, metadata, and non-traditional technical support tools like mobile devices, blogs, and wikis
- ◆ Emerging technologies - Virtual people as tech support avatars, pervasive computing, and entirely new types of interfaces

In the second portion of the evening, Neil will share his insights about changes in the role of the technical communicator, such as getting involved in strategic definition, focusing on content rather than writing (and how the difference was, in one case, worth \$8 million), watching for technical changes, and paying attention to the business issues that define our environment.

The Consultants and Independent Contractors Special Interest Group (CIC-SIG) will meet immediately before the main meeting.

This interesting and speculative discussion is fueled by Neil's 26 years of experience in the field and, more specifically, by his 15 years as an independent consultant. Among his many STC activities, he manages the Beyond the Bleeding Edge stem at the annual conference, is a columnist for Intercom magazine, and is an STC Associate Fellow affiliated with the Boston chapter. Neil is president of Hyper/Word Services of Tewksbury, MA (www.hyperword.com).

- ◆ Date: Thursday, September 8, 2005
- ◆ Place: AmeriSuites Hotel, Independence

Upcoming events

- ◆ 9/8/2005: Neil Perlin: What's Up, eDoc? - Emerging Trends in Technology: Blogs, Wikis, and More
Neil Perlin (Sept. 8 meeting) would prefer an LCD projector with 1280x1024 resolution. If you can loan the chapter an LCD projector for one night, please let the Programs Committee know!
- ◆ 9/9/2005: Networking Luncheon: 356th Fighter Group, North Canton.
- ◆ 9/14/2005: Webinar: Dreamweaver MX 2004: Part 1. Hosted by Quadax in Fairview Park
- ◆ 9/21/2005: Webinar: Dreamweaver MX 2004: Part 2. Hosted by Quadax in Fairview Park

Reminder: If you RSVP but do not show up for a meeting, it costs the chapter money — we have to pay up front for meals. Please remember to let the Programs committee know if you cannot make it to a meeting.

Upcoming events (non-NEOSTC)

- ◆ 9/22/2005: Northeast Ohio Chapter of the Usability Professionals' Association is presenting "Page Organization". <http://www.neoupa.org/>

STC volunteer opportunities

We are currently looking for someone to manage the chapter competition. If you are interested, please contact Bob Young (Ryoung1956@sbcglobal.net)

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Member profile: Lori Klepfer

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

This is a new feature in Lines and Letters to help introduce our members to each other.

Lori Klepfer heads up LJK Consulting, with much of her business dealing with training design and development. If you visit her company web site at <http://www.ljkconsulting.com/>, you see that her areas of interest include e-learning strategy, curriculum design and development, online content development, documentation, and usability consulting.

Originally from Enon Valley, Pennsylvania, Lori was the first graduate of YSUs Professional Writing and Editing Program, where she studied with Bege Bowers.

She has worked in the tech com field for over sixteen years. During the last ten years, she consulted with Fortune 1000 and middle-market companies within the greater Cleveland, OH, and Pittsburgh, PA, areas.

A highly active member of NEO STC, Lori served as a former president of our chapter and this year ran for the STC Nominating Committee. Currently part of the Management Team for the STC Consultant and Independent Contractors Special Interest Group (CIC-SIG), Lori is also manager of the NEO STC CIC-SIG.

A winner of STC-sponsored international and regional awards for online help and software and hardware user guides, Lori has also been a local and international publications competitions judge and led judging efforts for our chapter.

In addition to her work with STC, Lori is currently President of Greater Cleveland American Society for Training & Development (ASTD), the second year of a 2-year term. She has served on the Greater Cleveland ASTD board for 4 years.

Lori currently lives in South Euclid, where she recently bought a house.

Membership drive a success

By Beth Williams (Beth_Williams@intuit.com)

One of the goals of any professional organization is to not only attract new members, but also to retain current members. To this goal, NEO STC held the first part of a membership drive on August 24 and 25. We received a list from the STC international office of approximately 200 people whose membership has not been renewed over the past 5+ years. Of that list of 200, we spoke

directly to or left messages for 95 people, sent emails to 55 more people, and cleaned another 50 or so from the list completely (people who have moved out of the area, changed jobs and we don't have new information for, and so on). We invited these people to the September 8 meeting with Neil Perlin, as well as talked to them about the updated website and other recent changes in the chapter. Hopefully this contact will regenerate interest in the chapter from these former members.

I would like to thank the following people for making phone calls to these inactive members: Bob Young, Stephanie Webster, Kim Lindsey, Jill McCauslin, Brian Baddour, and Sarah Burke. Thanks also goes out to Mario Morelos for creating phone scripts for the callers, and especially to Jill McCauslin for offering the RADCom office and their phone lines to the chapter for this membership drive. I really appreciate everyone's help.

During the week of August 29, many of you active members will also be contacted by a current board or committee member. We want to let you know about some of the exciting activities the chapter is planning for the year, as well as to allow you to give us feedback on what you are looking for from the chapter. If you receive a phone call or email from one of the board or committee members, please take the time to them know your thoughts on the chapter. We want to make sure none of you end up on that list of lapsed members over the next few years. This is your chapter — please participate in making it a valuable resource for all of us!

The new national STC Training Program begins October 20 and 21

Imagine a two-day course covering the things you need to advance your career in technical communication — an in-depth, focused course taught by some of the most respected names in the field.

Now imagine that you have a choice of five such courses, each covering a different subject within technical communication. That's the STC Training Program — a new learning venue designed for today's professionals.

The five two-day courses, described in detail at <http://www.stc.org/training>, cover the following subjects:

- ◆ The Architecture of Content. Instructor: Jonathan Price, STC Fellow

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- ◆ Creating and Using Personas to Improve Usability. Instructor: Whitney Quesenbery, STC Associate Fellow
- ◆ Focusing on Content: Making Web Sites Work for Users. Instructors: Janice (Ginny) Redish, STC Fellow, and Caroline Jarrett
- ◆ Leadership in Information Management: Developing the Business Framework and Implementation Roadmap for Single Sourcing, Content Management, and Knowledge Management. Instructor: Benhong Rosaline (Roz) Tsai, STC Associate Fellow
- ◆ XML: From Hand-Coding to WYSIWYG Authoring. Instructor: Neil Perlin, STC Associate Fellow

The STC Training Program will take place at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City, Crystal City, Virginia (near Washington, DC). Register by September 21, 2005, and the cost for STC members is \$1,095 (with hotel, \$1,295*) and \$1,255 for non-members (with hotel, \$1,455*). After September 21, costs increase \$150.

*Hotel accommodations include up to three nights lodging in Crystal City, Virginia. Registration includes two breakfasts and two lunches. Discounts are available for multiple registrants from the same company.

Handy hint: Advanced undo

You probably use the undo feature one or two times a day. Did you know that, especially in newer applications, you can often undo multiple changes?

Multiple undo is typically available through the toolbar. For example, in Microsoft Word, multiple undo is available from the Standard toolbar. To undo multiple commands in Word:

1. Click the arrow next to **Undo**.
2. Microsoft Word displays a list of the most recent actions you can undo.
3. Click the action that you want to undo.
4. If you don't see the action, scroll through the list. When you undo an action, you also undo all actions above it in the list.
5. If you don't like the results, click the Redo list to redo them!
6. You can select multiple redos, too.

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>).

Technical writing

- ◆ Altronic, Inc. , a local engine controls company in Girard, Ohio, seeks a Technical Communicator to prepare technical documentation, brochures, and trade journal articles. This opening was directly submitted by Altronic, Inc.
- ◆ DRB Systems, a leader in computer solutions for the car care industry, has an opening for a Technical Writer in Uniontown, Ohio, to write, review, and publish user and support documentation.

Web design

- ◆ The Sherwin-Williams Company is seeking a Senior Web Developer/Internet Technologist for its Cleveland headquarters. The Senior Web Developer will serve as a key technical resource on a team responsible for designing, developing, and maintaining multiple web properties for marketing brand groups throughout the company.
- ◆ Kaiser Permanente is looking for an Interactive Media and Graphic Designer to participate in the planning, production, and dissemination of electronic and printed communications materials.

Training and instructional design

- ◆ The National Inventors Hall of Fame is seeking a Curriculum Designer to join its education team in Akron. The Curriculum Designer will develop innovative, inquiry-based educational curricula and programming for young children ages two through seven.
- ◆ Timken is seeking a Learning and Development Principal for its Canton office. This individual will design and create new programs and processes to build organization and associate capability, including determining development needs and evaluating vendor-provided and instructor-led courses.

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Graphic design

- ◆ Cedar Point, the number one amusement park in the world, is seeking a Graphic Designer with an emphasis on print design/production to join its award-winning design team in Sandusky.
- ◆ Jo-Ann Stores has an opening in Hudson for a Designer to oversee the creative development, execution, and production of print advertising, in-store signage, and other ad venues.

Editing

- ◆ Progressive is seeking an Experience Editor III for its Mayfield Village office to write and edit copy for print and electronic policy communications.
- ◆ Ernst & Young is seeking a Content Manager/Editor to work within the Global Assurance and Advisory Business Services Knowledge Management's Accounting & Auditing Publishing Group in Cleveland. The Content Manager/Editor will package and manage the delivery of content, write and edit content, oversee production staff and staff projects, ensure customer service, and contribute to sales and product management.
- ◆ Penton Media in Cleveland, Ohio, is seeking an Associate Editor for its American Machinist and Welding Design & Fabrication magazines. The Associate Editor will develop, write, and edit articles; conduct interviews within the industry; and organize and produce special projects.
- ◆ The University Hospitals Health System is seeking a Publications Editor to develop and manage communications, including newsletters, magazines and brochures, sent from UHHS to consumers and referring physicians.

Communications and Marketing

- ◆ Community Health Partners is seeking an Advertising & Publications Coordinator/Web Editor for its Lorain, Ohio, office. This individual will provide professional support for publications, media buying and placement, website content and development, and special technical projects.
- ◆ Westfield Group is seeking a Senior Marketing Communications Specialist to support and execute communications, promotions, and product marketing initiatives.

- ◆ The Reserves Network, a total staffing solutions provider, is seeking a Director of Communications for its Fairview Park, Ohio, office. The Director of Communications will manage all marketing, advertising, public relations, and internal communications.
- ◆ Hathaway Brown School in Beachwood, Ohio, seeks a third or fourth year college student majoring in marketing or communications to work under the supervision of the Director of Communications. The intern must be detail oriented and possess excellent organizational, writing, and communication skills.

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

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