

President's Column

Brian Smith

It is hard to believe another year for NEO STC has already gone by! As the 2015-2016 year comes to a close, NEO STC will be electing new officers and acknowledging outstanding volunteers during the Awards Banquet on May 12 at the Creekside Restaurant in Brecksville, Ohio. Be sure to check out the [registration page](#) for more information.



1 Brian Smith

We also have several great opportunities for networking and meeting up with STC friends over lunch on May 11 and an outing to Sarah's Vineyard in June. Take a look at our [events page](#) for more details.

The planning committee is collecting proposals and scheduling speakers for the 2016-2017 year, which begins in September 2016 and runs through April 2017. If you are interested in presenting a topic during one of our monthly meetings, don't hesitate to submit a proposal to our programs committee at programs@neostc.org. We look forward to another exciting year!

NEO STC Community Officer Elections – 2016

Elections will be held May 12, 2016, at the Annual NEO STC Community Awards Banquet and Election.

Candidates for our 2016/2017 NEO STC officer positions are:

Jason Vensel: Vice President Candidate

Tricia Spayer: Treasurer Candidate

Kelly Graham: Secretary Candidate

All voting members may vote for our candidates in person or by proxy at this meeting on May 12th. For each officer position, each voting member may vote for the candidate identified above, or identify a write-in candidate. Any write-in candidate must be a regular, student, or senior member of the NEO STC community to qualify. If we have a quorum of voting members (10% of membership) voting at the May 12 meeting, then the candidate who receives the majority of votes in their respective position will be elected.

If you are unable to attend the May 12th meeting, and would like to vote by proxy instead, please contact [Lisa Mileusnich](#) by May 10th to let her know who you are designating as your proxy to attend the meeting and vote in your place.

And the Winner Is...

Lynn Nickels

Carrie Cianciola! Carrie is this year's Distinguished Chapter Service Award winner for the NEO STC chapter!



Carrie is currently the Membership Committee Chair and the Student Mentorship Program coordinator. In the past, she has served as the Programs Committee Chair and has been a judge on the Competitions Committee, as well as a volunteer for the Competitions Committee. She was also a volunteer at the STC Summit and has been a continuously active member since 1999.

The Distinguished Community Service Awards recognize the hard work and commitment of STC's community leaders. The three awards—the Distinguished Chapter Service Award, Distinguished SIG Service Award, and Distinguished Service Award for Students—recognize an individual's exemplary effort, energy, and dedication to their community and its activities.

The Distinguished Community Service Award is the highest level of recognition that a member can receive for service to their community.

NOMINATION PROCESS

Please consult the guidelines for the complete nomination process.

Who is eligible: Any STC Community member, excluding the President and Vice President of that community and members of the STC Board of Directors

Who may nominate: The Professional Chapter, SIG, or Student Chapter Executive Council

Congratulations, Carrie! Keep up the good work!

Blogs, Bones, and Body Parts

Kelly Graham

See? Didn't that grab you more than 'How to Write a Technical Blog'? That's called the hook! On Thursday evening, April 14, Lynn Nickels shared how the technical blog has become a way for companies to promote technical products and services via the Web. Lynn explained how blogging—no longer confined to the "social" of social media—has become a great marketing tool to gently steer the potential customer to your company without even naming the company!



2 Lynn Nickels presents "Technically Blogged"

Lynn developed her blog formula—which she likens to a skeleton—by drawing on her years as a journalist. She morphed who, what, when, where, why, and how into a head, a face, bones, and body parts. Lynn reminded us to hone our interviewing skills to pull valuable pearls from subject matter experts. She led us through a couple of quick

exercises to demonstrate the difference between ‘okay’ content and ‘grab-and-keep-your-attention’ content. Lynn emphasized that we should TELL, not SELL! We need only solve the customer’s pain point or problem, and we have a new customer!

So what is a blog? According to Lynn, a blog can be a tutorial, a list, a how-to article, a personal story or anecdote, a case study, a post, a sermon, and the list goes on. A blog can be inspirational or motivational. It can be about hot topics or current events. It can predict, inform, or educate. What’s the most frequently searched blog type? According to Google, it’s fashion! Who would have thunk it?

Lynn is a senior member of STC, co-editor of NEO STC’s Lines & Letters, co-lead of the Academic Relations committee, and former co-lead of the Programs committee. She’s a Global Marketing Communications rep at Rockwell Automation and has worked as a technical writer and journalist. Her most recent experience includes international public speaker at Content Marketing World in Sydney, AU and Singapore, where she participated in a technology panel discussion about the technical expertise needed by writers and the value of using social media to promote products and services in business. She has written technical blogs for Rockwell Automation and creates content marketing materials with a technical spin.

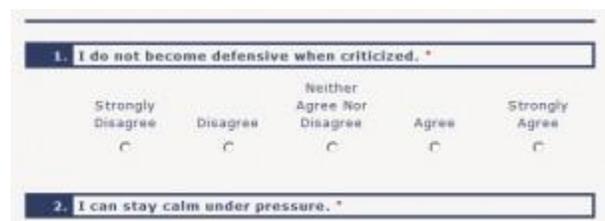


AKHIA, a full-service marketing communication agency in Hudson, graciously hosted our April NEO STC program. Special thanks to Jodee Juarez and Celeste Conklin for their hospitality.

Emotional Intelligence and the Technical Writer

Jeanette Evans

Here is a quick view of how emotional intelligence (EI) can apply to our work and what EI is in the context of what we do professionally.



One take from a teacher of technical writing

Dr. Alex Ilyasova, Director of the Professional and Technical Writing Program at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, at an IEEE Conference

in July, 2015, presented a paper that tackled the topic The Role Of Emotional Intelligence and Engineering Communication.

She defines EI and describes the role it can play in engineering work and communication with teams. Her video is a must see at:

<http://sites.ieee.org/pcs/the-role-of-emotional-intelligence-and-engineering-communication/>. Here are some highlights from the video.

- Managing your own emotions and the emotions of others -- that is what she defines as important in the workplace leading to better managing of projects.
- Some strategies for improving your EI include time and practice to bring you to a place where you are aware of emotions around you and to not participate in the emotions, just evaluate and deal with it.
- You need to listen to what is happening with your own responses and what you are hearing.
- If you are aware of your emotions and the emotions of those around you and have a handle on this, you have a good EI.
- If you can manage your emotions and the emotions of those around you, this can help a project continue.

She notes that a good EI helps in engineering work and lets you better manage projects and deal with the people who work on a project.

Defining and evaluating EI

As EI is about being aware of your feelings and the feelings of those around you, a good EI can be related to personal and professional success. If you have a good EI, you can improve your decision-making process and improve your ability to function in your job.

It can also help with problem-solving skills and improved communication. Christine Casper of Communication, Motivation, and Management,

Inc., notes, "if we are in a heightened state of agitation or anger, we cannot make good decisions..."

The free quiz at <http://www.ihhp.com/free-eq-quiz/> lets you evaluate your current EI. Here are some of the questions.

1. I do not become defensive when criticized
2. I can stay calm under pressure
3. I handle setback effectively
4. I am positive
5. I maintain a sense of humor
6. I try to see things from another's perspective
7. I air grievances skillfully
8. I can listen without jumping to judgment
9. I can freely admit to making a mistake

Looking at this evaluation can be a good first step to improving EI to improve professionally and even personally. That is where I am starting.

Academic Relations and John Carroll University Collaboration

Lynn Nickels

The Academic Relations Committee for NEO STC had a great meeting with Associate Professor of English Tom Pace, on April 28. Lisa Mileusnich and Lynn Nickels were also joined by David Frey of Rockwell Automation and Ariel Clark of Mayfield High School. Ariel is participating in a two-week job shadowing block at Rockwell and was able to attend the meeting with David.

The group discussed how NEO STC can help JCU English and writing students learn more about the field of technical writing and writing careers, in general. Fall presentations at the university are planned with the opportunity to participate in the Career Fair next February. Tom also extended us the invitation to audit and critique his writing class to provide feedback.

Lines & Letters

Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



May 2016 Issue

Page 5

Additionally, Tom is looking for internship opportunities for his fall students. Paid and un-paid internships are needed at area companies to help students get real-world experience, as well as to fulfill their internship credit hours. Students will receive up to 3 credit hours during the semester. Companies need to provide a written description of the planned internship and attend the students' final presentations at the end of the semester. Tom needs to know by mid-summer if a company is interested and the internship description needs to be submitted by the last week of August.

Finally, JCU is looking for adjunct faculty to teach 400-level future writing classes in the areas of Media and Environmental Writing. Classes would be for the 2017-2018 school year. A Master's degree and subject matter expertise are required. Classes will be either one night per week for 2.5 hours or two nights per week for 75 minutes and will probably be on Tuesdays and/or Thursdays.

Contact Tom at tpace@jcu.edu for further information.

Cedarville University Students Visit Parker Hannifin and Rockwell Automation

Lynn Nickels

Recently, a request came from Senior Professor Sandi Harner of Cedarville University to Rockwell Automation and Parker Hannifin. Sandi directs the Professional Writing and Information Design Program and said, "Each year, we take several of our students (usually about 15 students plus 2 professors) on a spring trip to visit a couple of companies where we can meet with their technical writing staff and talk to them about their careers."

The Cedarville students/faculty first visited Parker Hannifin on April 8th and met with Senior NEO STC Members Janean Voss and Lisa Mileusnich. We gave them an overview of Parker and the products we make, explained some of our daily

project tasks, reviewed tools that technical communicators use, and took the group on a brief building tour. It was wonderful to meet the students - their curriculum is preparing them to be the writers of the future!

Cedarville alumna and Senior NEO STC Member Carrie Cianciola took the lead and organized the Rockwell Automation portion of the visit. A group presentation was arranged for that afternoon and each presenter was a member of our local NEO STC chapter. The presentation included information about technical writing jobs at Rockwell and much, much more.



Information Development Manager David Frey kicked off the meeting by introducing students to the products Rockwell Automation makes. A "How It Is Made" video from the Mars factory opened up the session showing students how Rockwell Products are used on the manufacturing lines to make Snickers candy bars. The students were delighted to receive the sweet treat after the video!

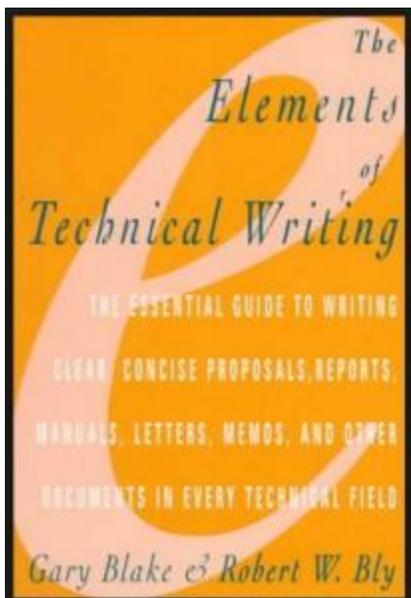
Carrie talked about how we create and publish documents, then Kelly Graham gave an editing lesson. Robin Boldt instructed the audience about information architecture and user research, while Bob Young spoke about the tools we use at Rockwell, as well as giving the students an in-depth introduction to the features and benefits of STC membership. Lynn Nickels talked about Marketing Communication roles. Finally, Dave wrapped up the presentation with tips about how to get a job in the field of writing and informed students about what hiring managers are looking for.

Giving back as professionals is vital to passing the torch—or in this case, the proverbial “pen,” to encourage young people to go into writing fields. If you have a story about academic outreach you would like to share, please contact the newsletter committee. We would love to hear about it!



Review: Elements of Technical Writing

Jeanette Evans



Robert Bly has a background as a technical writer, teacher of technical writing, and author of 17 books on writing and business. He teams up with consultant Gary Blake to write this comprehensive look on the subject of technical writing.

The book covers two aspects of the subject: elements of technical writing and tasks of the technical writer.

The authors address how to write clear and concise materials that include proposals, reports, manuals, letters, and memos. They also include an appendix on writing in a systems environment and another appendix on software for writers.

In the first major part of the book on the elements of technical writing, we get a good look at how to write numbers, units of measure, equations, and symbols; rules of punctuation, grammar, abbreviations, and capitalization; and words and phrases commonly misused in technical writing.

In the second major part of the book, we see the section on tasks of the technical writer, including work associated with proposals and specifications; articles, papers, abstracts, and reports; letters and memos; and manuals and documentation.

We get a good overview of the field and of the basics in this book. The book could help a novice get background in the subjects covered. The book could also help an experienced writer get a good review of the basics.

The Elements of Technical Writing – By Gary Blake and Robert W. Bly. Publisher: Longman (1993), 174 pages.