

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



Septem 2008 • Volume 25 Issue 1

Page 1

### President's column: Let's keep going strong!

It is officially the beginning of the new NEO STC year, but we have been going strong all summer. It has been an exciting summer with the incredible energy of all our committee volunteers!

#### Successful leadership training

We had a successful Leadership Workshop on August 2, 2008. We welcomed attendees from the Southwestern Ohio and Pittsburgh STC chapters and the Cleveland chapter of ASM. Thanks to Stephanie Webster and Tricia Spayer for all of their hard work to coordinate the event and help bring Jackie Damrau to NEO STC! We are planning to incorporate the ideas Jackie shared at this workshop into our goals for this year and continued leadership training.

#### Introducing two new committees

This summer, we introduced two new committees to serve the needs of our members: Sponsorship and Social Networking.

#### Sponsorship committee

Our chapter is building on the energy and leadership of previous years to introduce our new Sponsorship committee. There are many initiatives that we've put in place to support the growth of STC and the community that we would like to be able to sustain for generations to come:

- ◆ Our Academic Relations committee's scholarship program has supported students entering the field of technical communications.
- ◆ The "Software Saturday" series has brought in some of the most talented and inspirational trainers in our field today.
- ◆ We've worked hard to provide a diverse and exciting set of programs and events to meet our chapter's needs.

Bob Young, one of NEO STC's most dedicated and experienced members, is the chair of the Sponsorship committee this year. Please contact Bob Young (ryoung1956@sbcglobal.net) for more information about sponsoring a meeting or getting involved on the committee this year.

#### Social Networking committee

We had several requests from our members over the last year for additional opportunities to network. The

Social Networking committee provides a casual, low-cost way to meet new people or stay-in-touch with the members in our community.

Many of us are balancing time with our families, work, and all of the other priorities in our lives. One of the goals of this committee is to provide ways to include members who may find it difficult to attend our regular meetings or Networking Lunch series. We welcome families, friends, members and non-members at our Social Networking events. For anyone interested in learning about STC, this is a low-pressure way to get to know more about the society and our members.

Thanks to Denise Kadilak, the Social Networking committee chair, we've already had three successful events over the summer. We had "Dinner and a Movie" in June, went to Blossom Music Center to hear the Cleveland Orchestra in July, and ate together at Fat Fish Blue restaurant in August to welcome Jackie Damrau to town before our Leadership Workshop.

Join us for our next event on Saturday, September 27, 2008. We are meeting at 3:30 pm at the Boston Store Trail head on Boston Mills Road for an easy two-mile hike on the Tow Path. This should be an opportune time to escape to the Cuyahoga Valley and see the fall colors.

We are accepting any ideas for the Social Networking committee from our members as we schedule for the rest of the year. Also, please consider volunteering to help coordinate events. Contact Denise Kadilak for more information about this committee.

#### Welcome to our new committee volunteers

I want to welcome our newest board members and committee volunteers:

- ◆ Grace Zellers as a representative of the Public Relations committee
- ◆ Sharon Jendrisak as co-chair of the Membership committee and representative on the Sponsorship committee

Thanks for getting more involved with STC this year!

#### We are still looking for volunteers for our Education committee

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

- ◆ Software Saturdays: The Programs committee is helping with Software Saturdays this year, but we

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



Septem 2008 • Volume 25 Issue 1

Page 2

would welcome more volunteers. Thanks to Anne Paczula for coordinating our 2008-2009 events!

- ◆ 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. This is a volunteer role that can be done remotely.

We will mentor any new Education committee volunteers. Please contact Amy Vogt for more information.

### Remember to update your STC profile

Remember that mailings for NEO STC will not be sent every month. Notices will be sent by e-mail. Please keep the information in your stc.org member profile up-to-date.

### Member news

Congratulations to Anne Paczula on the birth of twin boys, Thomas and Daniel, on 8/14/08!

Please contact Amy Vogt (avogt@ppipubs.com) if you are interested in getting more involved with NEO STC this year.

### September meeting reminder

**Join the Northeast Ohio STC community for its first meeting of the year on September 11, 2008.**

- ◆ Topic: Meet the STC
  - A series of round-table discussions:
    - Benefits of an STC membership
    - Topics covered at the 55th Technical Communication Summit
    - Topics you would like to see covered in future Technical Communication Summits
    - Current trends in employment: traditional (W-2) and contract (1099)
    - Employment committee enhancements planned for the 2008-2009 year
    - More...
- ◆ Date: Thursday, September 11, 2008.
- ◆ Place: Mavis Winkle's, Independence

If you plan to attend, please email the Programs committee.

**For more information regarding the meeting, click here.**

### Upcoming events

- ◆ 9/11/08: Monthly meeting. See September meeting reminder for detail.
- ◆ 9/11/08: Live Web seminar. "The ABCs of Documentation Usability Testing," presented by Leah Guren. Sign up at <http://stc.org/edu/seminars01.asp>.
- ◆ 9/17/08: Live Web seminar. "How Quality Affects Global Customer Satisfaction," presented by Richard Sikes. Sign up at <http://stc.org/edu/seminars01.asp>.
- ◆ 9/27/08: Walk with NEO STC through the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Contact [denise.kadilak@blackbaud.com](mailto:denise.kadilak@blackbaud.com) by Sept. 25 if you are interested.
- ◆ 10/1/08: Live Web seminar. "Printed Books and Online Help Using a Wiki," presented by Rahul Mehrotra. 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 website for more information and to register.
- ◆ 10/15/08: Deadline for NEO STC competition entries. See <http://neostc.org/comp/callforentries2008.htm>.
- ◆ 10/15/08: Deadline for NEO STC judging applications for this year's competition. See [http://neostc.org/comp/2008/NEOSTC-judgesapplicationform\\_final\\_2008.doc](http://neostc.org/comp/2008/NEOSTC-judgesapplicationform_final_2008.doc)
- ◆ 10/23/08: Live Web seminar. "Task Support Clusters: A Focused Architecture for Practical User Assistance," presented by Michael Hughes. Sign up at <http://stc.org/edu/seminars01.asp>.
- ◆ 11/5/08: Live Web seminar. "How to Avoid Common Graphical Mistakes that Technical Communicators Make," presented by Naomi Robbins. Sign up at <http://stc.org/edu/seminars01.asp>.
- ◆ 11/08/2008: Cedarville one-day conference. See <http://people.cedarville.edu/stuorg/stc/conference.html>

### Welcome new members and congratulations to new senior members!

We have three new members that joined us in July:

- ◆ Jan Crews
- ◆ Anna Miller
- ◆ Cheryl Rouland

We look forward to meeting you!

The following is a list of this year's senior members:

- ◆ Traci Billingsley: 02/04/2003
- ◆ Robert Radcliffe: 04/04/2003
- ◆ Carla Locke: 04/04/2003
- ◆ Joseph Hodge: 06/09/2003
- ◆ Jill Goodland: 10/03/2003
- ◆ George Angelato: 12/08/2003

Congratulations and thank you for your continued membership!

### Strategic plan and goals for 2008-2009

*By Amy Vogt*

All NEO STC committee chairs and representatives participated in developing our goals for this year. I would like to thank all our volunteers for their dedication and energy this summer. This is a summary of our chapter's goals and direction for the 2008-2009 year.

Our chapter covers a large geographic area and serves members with different interests and schedules. This year we would like to include as many members as possible and increase value of membership. We will:

- ◆ Have some meetings available online. Our October 15, 2008 meeting will be available remotely. We will be meeting at Intuit, but the MadCap presentation will be offered by Webinar.
- ◆ Provide more options for networking and training. We are introducing Social Networking options in the evenings or weekends. These casual events tap into the creativity of our community and also include families. We have scheduled three Software Saturdays this year.
- ◆ Continue our Networking Lunch series
- ◆ Offer a strong set of programs that keep us in tune with the latest trends and technologies

- ◆ Present cost-saving options for STC members traveling to Northeast Ohio and NEO STC members attending events in other cities.
- ◆ Maintain contact with lapsed members and actively welcome those who have shown interest in STC

Develop the leadership in our society and provide continued training. Recognize the talents and dedication of our volunteers. We will:

- ◆ Continue volunteer recognition program using the point system refined early in 2007
- ◆ Publish a skills database within our community
- ◆ Send letters to volunteers' bosses for recognition
- ◆ Have committee chairs talk about what they do, train volunteers (informally either before meetings, or during social networking events)

Encourage the future of the society by supporting our students. This year we plan to:

- ◆ Support the Cedarville student regional conference on November 8, 2008
- ◆ Include students with the development and updating of our public relations and marketing material.
- ◆ Continue our scholarship program and look into ways to sustain this financially for the future
- ◆ Encourage student involvement with NEO STC
- ◆ Participate in a job fair or career day

Enhance our Employment options for our members. We plan to:

- ◆ Update list of employers
- ◆ Provide RSS feed options to help users better track available positions
- ◆ Plan to hold a Career Expo in 2009

Use member connections and resources to collaborate with other societies and enhance STC message in the community. We plan to:

- ◆ Continue NEO STC's involvement with CTSC (Cleveland Technical Societies Council) and NOCA (Northeast Ohio Communications Affiliates)
- ◆ Collaborate with the American Chemical Society (ACS) for the February 18, 2009 meeting
- ◆ Encourage collaboration with other STC chapters

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



Septem 2008 • Volume 25 Issue 1

Page 4

- ◆ Extend support and collaboration with university technical communication programs
- ◆ We are planning to add a new area to our website dedicated to Community Involvement, highlighting charities supported by our members

Additionally, we would like to:

- ◆ Evaluate the website and ask for board feedback about design, usability, content, and/or function updates. Continue to make use of technology through our wiki and RSS feeds.
- ◆ Evaluate and update NEO STC brochure and marketing material.
- ◆ Start program to attract corporate sponsorship for our meetings, events, and scholarships.
- ◆ Begin planning for a Regional Conference in October 2010.

### Send in your entries for the NEO STC 2008-2009 Competitions!

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? Would you like to see how you measure up to industry standards?

The NEO STC Competitions is your chance to receive peer and professional feedback on the work you do and also to shine in the areas you excel!

We are soliciting entries for Online Communications, Technical Art, and Technical Publications. See <http://neostc.org/comp/index.htm> for NEO STC information. For general rules, refer to STC's General Information and Competition Rules for a complete description.

The deadline for NEO STC entries is Wednesday, October 15, 2008 — at our October Chapter Meeting.

Entry Costs:

- \$80.00 STC members
- \$95.00 non-members
- \$60.00 students

Award presentations are to be at our holiday party on 12/11.

If you have any questions, please contact Sherri Henkin at [shenkin@amtrust.com](mailto:shenkin@amtrust.com), Kristen Jackson at

[Kristen374@yahoo.com](mailto:Kristen374@yahoo.com), or Lori Neuman at [Ineuman@ra.rockwell.com](mailto:Ineuman@ra.rockwell.com).

### Call for judges for the 2008-2009 Competitions

We are looking for volunteers to help judge the Online Communications, Technical Art, and Technical Publications competition entries. For details on being a judge, see <http://neostc.org/comp/callforjudges2008.htm>.

Competition judge training is to be 10/23 at Mavis Winkle's on Rockside Road in Independence at 6-8PM. Judging is to take place 11/6 from 6-9PM at Rockwell Automation at 1 Allen-Bradley Drive in Mayfield Heights.

The cut-off date for entries is 10/15. We are looking forward to productive judging sessions where we provide constructive comments to all entrants.

Becoming a judge provides you with an opportunity to recognize the efforts of your peers, and is a rewarding experience!

Please contact Lori Neuman or Kristen Jackson if you have any questions.

### Cedarville Conference coming on 11/08/2008

The Cedarville University STC Student Chapter would like to remind you to save the date for our one-day conference on November 8, 2008. Our theme is "A 2020 Vision of the Future," and we will focus on the future of the profession of technical communication. Our keynote speaker will be Mark Clifford, STC president. We will also feature a special guest speaker Dr. Carolyn Rude, chair of the English department and professor at Virginia Tech.

We are still looking for speakers for our breakout sessions; we will welcome any proposals for papers until September 15. Please send your submissions through email to [harners@cedarville.edu](mailto:harners@cedarville.edu) or submit them on our website. Word documents or PDFs are preferred.

The prices for our conference are as follows:

- ◆ Undergraduate or graduate student: \$15 (early bird); \$20 (after October 15)
- ◆ STC members: \$75 (early bird); \$80 (after October 15)
- ◆ Non-STC members: \$90 (early bird); \$95 (after October 15)



The conference will be located on the beautiful campus of Cedarville University, located in southwestern Ohio. The University is just 40 minutes from Dayton and an hour from Columbus and Cincinnati.

We hope that you will join us on November 8th!

### Academic Relations update

The Academic Relations committee is looking forward to a new year of interesting work with area students, new technical communication programs, and our NEO STC scholarship. Last year Pressco in part helped sponsor our scholarship, and we cannot thank Pressco enough for its generous support of ongoing educational activities for our chapter. If you are aware of any sponsors or potential sponsors for our 2008-2009 scholarship, please contact Co-Chairs Jeanette Evans or Sarah Burke.

Also, if you missed the announcement about our 2007-2008 NEO STC scholarship winner Katie Marburger, be sure to check out the Lines and Letters June 2008 edition article, "NEO STC scholarship winner update." Katie is a technical communication major at Cedarville University and the winner of our first NEO STC scholarship. She is also the upcoming vice president for the Cedarville STC student chapter.

The STC Cedarville Student Chapter recently issued a call for presenters for its upcoming November conference. Our chapter will be sending representatives to this conference and supporting the student chapter in any way that we can.

### Charity raffle

Just in time for the Holiday! A charity raffle to benefit the Cleveland Foodbank and YOU can benefit too!

We need your items for our Charity Raffle. You can donate or pledge (which means you are obligated to donate) books, tools, software, event tickets, whatever you would like to donate. We will then sell tickets, which will be pulled, one winning ticket per item, at the December 11th meeting.

Winners need not be present to win; however, you are responsible for picking up what you have won because Santa Claus doesn't deliver this early.

More exciting details to follow!

### 'Twill be a dark and stormy night when NEO STC will meet to hear your worst!

*"It was a dark and stormy night; the rain fell in torrents — except at occasional intervals, when it was checked by a violent gust of wind which swept up the streets (for it is in London that our scene lies), rattling along the housetops, and fiercely agitating the scanty flame of the lamps that struggled against the darkness."* — Edward George Bulwer-Lytton, *Paul Clifford* (1830)

With these words, Edward George Bulwer-Lytton was doomed forever to be associated with the title of "The Worst Writer Of Opening Sentences In Literature." This opening sentence was the inspiration (?) for an annual contest, sponsored by San Jose State University, that challenges people from all over the world with the simple dare: Produce the opening sentence to the worst novel ever written. It doesn't ask that you actually write the novel; just the opening sentence.

In 1982, Prof. Scott Rice in the English Department at San Jose State University started the Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest. The challenge: write an opening sentence to rival Edward George Bulwer-Lytton's opening sentence to his novel, *Paul Clifford*.

We want YOU, dear reader, to take up this challenge, write your own opening sentence, and bring it to our March 12th meeting. Read your entry aloud during dinner at the meeting and be in the running for a new Webster's Thesaurus from your peers at the NEO STC. You'll still have plenty of time to submit your entry(ies) yourself to the official contest by April 15th, a very ominous date indeed!

For examples and more information, visit the website at <http://www.bulwer-lytton.com>

A sample apropos of technical writing, we present the 2003 runner-up: *"The flock of geese flew overhead in a 'V' formation — not in an old-fashioned-looking Times New Roman kind of a 'V,' branched out slightly at the two opposite arms at the top of the 'V,' nor in a more modern-looking, straight and crisp, linear Arial sort of 'V' (although since they were flying, Arial might have been appropriate), but in a slightly asymmetric, tilting off-to-one-side sort of italicized Courier New-like 'V' — and LaFonte knew that he was just the type of man to know the difference."* — John Dotson (U.S. Naval Officer), Arlington, VA

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



Septem 2008 • Volume 25 Issue 1

Page 6

### New words for 2008

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

According to the Merriam-Webster website, the 2008 print update of Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition, is available in bookstores on September 1, 2008. The new dictionary entries are also available online.

Both the online and paper updates feature new words and phrases that M-W determined have successfully become part of the mainstream English language through prolonged and widespread usage in a variety of publications.

Here are some of the words:

- ◆ **air quotes** n pl (1989): a gesture made by raising and flexing the index and middle fingers of both hands that is used to call attention to a spoken word or expression
- ◆ **dark energy** n (1998): a hypothetical form of energy that produces a force that opposes gravity and is thought to be the cause of the accelerating expansion of the universe
- ◆ **dirty bomb** n (1956): a bomb designed to release radioactive material
- ◆ **dwarf planet** n (1993): a celestial body that orbits the sun and has a spherical shape but is too small to disturb other objects from its orbit
- ◆ **edamame** n (1951): immature green soybeans usu. in the pod
- ◆ **malware** n (1990): software designed to interfere with a computer's normal functioning
- ◆ **mental health day** n (1971) : a day that an employee takes off from work in order to relieve stress or renew vitality
- ◆ **netroots** n pl (2003): the grassroots political activists who communicate via the Internet esp. by blogs
- ◆ **norovirus** n (2002): any of a genus of small round single-stranded RNA viruses; specif: Norwalk Virus
- ◆ **phytonutrient** n (1994): a bioactive plant-derived compound (as resveratrol) associated with positive health effects
- ◆ **subprime** adj (1995): 1: having or being an interest rate that is higher than a prime rate and is extended

esp. to low-income borrowers 2: extending or obtaining a subprime loan

- ◆ **webinar** n (1998): a live online educational presentation during which participating viewers can submit questions and comments

### Current Employment committee goals

By David Cherney ([david.thebairdgroup@gmail.com](mailto:david.thebairdgroup@gmail.com))

The NEO STC Employment committee is being very proactive to help our members deal with an economy that seems to get worse every month. This article is intended to let members know what we are doing, and why.

### Available employment listings and databases

If you have not had to look for a position in a while you may be unfamiliar with current employment search resources. There is much less dependence on traditional approaches such as newspaper ads, and much more use of the Internet. Here is a brief list of some of the more obvious places to look:

Major national employment sites:

- ◆ Monster.com
- ◆ CareerBuilder
- ◆ Jobs.com
- ◆ Yahoo! HotJobs
- ◆ Jobs.net
- ◆ STC National openings
- ◆ Federal government employment

State and local sites:

- ◆ NEO STC job openings
- ◆ State of Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services

County and state government employment openings

- ◆ cleveland.com
- ◆ <http://www.ohio.com/>

### Chambers of Commerce

A Chamber of Commerce is run for the economic well-being of the members. A wide variety of benefits are available, all designed to make the Chamber an essential business tool. They are very good at what they do, and

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



Septem 2008 • Volume 25 Issue 1

Page 7

member companies depend on their Chamber as an essential business resource.

Chambers in the northeast Ohio area include:

- ◆ Council of Smaller Enterprises (COSE) (the greater Cleveland Chamber of Commerce)
- ◆ Greater Akron Chamber of Commerce
- ◆ Youngstown Chamber of Commerce
- ◆ Lorain County Chamber of Commerce
- ◆ Smaller, local Chambers of Commerce

### Why should you care?

Most Chambers have a list of available open positions. Listing available job openings is one of the services a Chamber provides to member companies. I believe that these lists are an overlooked resource. The national employment sites such as Monster.com receive a great deal of media coverage, and they also do a great deal of advertising. Job seekers often rely on the national sites and overlook local and regional resources. I strongly suggest that Chamber of Commerce employment listings be used since there will be less competition for the listed positions if they are unique.

The second reason a Chamber is a great employment resource is their member database. All Chambers have a database of current members which is always available to members. Sometimes this information is available to the public through the Chamber website. It is a great source of reliable, accurate information essential to a successful employment search.

The information you see in these databases is no more than 12 months old. Why? When a company joins or renews its membership, correct or corrected information is provided to the Chamber of Commerce. This information is provided by each company so Chamber personnel can communicate with them. Since membership fees are based on company size, larger companies pay considerable fees to be members, and receive significant perks that other companies must pay for. It is in a company's best interest to make sure this information is correct.

Chamber membership listings are also a great source of business from other Chamber members, since members often prefer to do business with other members. This is clearly another reason for this information to be kept up to date.

Learn to use this information to your advantage. Even small companies have websites these days, and they

usually include an "About page" which explains company history. There are also usually one or more pages that explain the products and/or services each company provides. Many companies also post current openings on their websites.

A Chamber database can be used to get a listing of all companies in a given zip code, or all companies in a certain industry. Many medium sized firms can be found that a job seeker might never know about.

This is a great way to find pertinent company information to send resumes, either by mail or e-mail.

### NEO STC Jobs Pages

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

The NEO STC Jobs pages are a good resource because the information is specific to the needs and talents of technical communicators. All members may post a resume which is world-searchable. Any employer anywhere in the world has the ability to view this information. Generally these companies will tend to be local, but there is nothing stopping employers in hot but thin job markets from recruiting our people.

Our jobs pages also allow members to check recent openings local employers have made us aware of. It appears many companies list openings with us that do not appear elsewhere. While we encourage all job seekers to use this resource we must be honest and say there are not enough openings to satisfy the current needs of our membership. While it is a great resource, it should be viewed as one tool among many.

We will shortly provide an updated list of employment/temp agencies. There are many more agencies than we listed in the past, and they are located throughout Ohio. Our members live/work in many parts of Ohio and western Pennsylvania. The expanded list will allow members to work with an agency that is local to them. It will be available shortly.

### Summary

The current economy in northeast Ohio is challenging for everyone. NEO STC will do whatever it can to help members in these uncertain times.

Keep your head and your spirits up and your eyes open.

Best of luck!

### NEO STC goes extracurricular

*By Kim Lindsey (klindsey@parker.com)*

#### Get Smart

A small band of NEO STC members braved a torrential downpour on June 29 to view the newly-released "Get Smart" film.

Trailers for "Get Smart" paled in comparison to our own "Subject To Control," so we were interested to see Hollywood's latest take on the spy thriller spoof.

The film itself did not disappoint. There were just enough references to the 1960's TV series to satisfy us longtime fans (... "Missed it by that much."...), but plenty of new twists and turns to keep things fresh for everyone.

After the movie, we headed over to the Quaker Steak and Lube for some health food and amiable conversation.

#### Blossom Festival Concert

For our next adventure, the intrepid STC'ers enjoyed an evening of Tchaikovsky under the stars at Blossom on July 19.

The Cleveland Orchestra showed once again why they are ranked as the best in the world. Under the baton of guest conductor Andris Nelsons, they performed works by Mussorgsky and Tchaikovsky. Violin soloist Julia Fischer provided a lively reading of the Tchaikovsky violin concerto to a very appreciative audience.

Before the concert, our group enjoyed a multi-ethnic picnic on the lawn (think sushi, hummus, and Subway!) while getting to know each other and their significant others.

The weather cooperated for a perfect evening of beautiful music and wonderful comraderie.

#### In Conclusion ...

Be sure to keep your schedule open for more activities as they come up through the chapter year. And if you have an event to suggest, please contact President Amy Vogt or Vice President Denise Kadilak. The idea is fun, and you might be surprised how many others in the chapter share your ideas of what "fun" is!

### Meeting review: Leadership day

*By Denise Kadilak (denise.kadilak@blackbaud.com)*

In early August, leadership authority Dr. Jackie Damrau held a one-day workshop hosted by the NEO STC. Dr. Damrau, who also chairs the STC Leadership Community Resource, outlined personal leadership skills, highlighted community leaders' responsibilities, offered a number of guidelines on working with and recruiting volunteers, and piloted participants through the labyrinthine STC website.

Although a good deal of Dr. Damrau's advice was more a matter of good common sense than revolutionary leadership theory, her focus on details and real-world experiences resulted in a number of epiphanic moments.

For example, to the simple question "What is a leader," Dr. Damrau offered the simple answer, "someone who causes others to act." The reality of the exchange is, however, hardly simple; it is a complicated balancing act between communicating a need and then stepping back and convincing others you have confidence in their ability to complete the chores at hand to meet the need.

In working toward establishing such a relationship, Dr. Damrau advocates that community leaders mentor and guide council members, support members by offering to troubleshoot complicated situations or issues, set and communicate definite goals, and participate in committees but avoid getting involved in the details.

Dr. Damrau also offered a number of tips for successful leadership: empower your people to make decisions, develop an environment that encourages openness and trust, and be visible and available. She encouraged audience participation at this point, asking others to share personal experiences. The result was a lively and somewhat informative discussion. As in most open-forum exchanges, keeping participants on message proved a bit difficult but Dr. Damrau did a good job bringing us back to topic and moving things along.

Perhaps the most useful segment of the workshop came just after lunch when Dr. Damrau dug into the STC website and uncovered the hidden treasures buried in the tangle of HTML pages. Surprisingly, the infamously un-user-friendly STC website hides a number of very useful pages, including information to help new leaders get started, budget worksheets, newsletter and public relations ideas, leadership training aids, and much more. Unfortunately, as great as this information was for STC leaders, the non-STC attendees at the workshop did not find the information especially useful, and this leads to



# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



Septem 2008 • Volume 25 Issue 1

Page 9

my biggest complaint about the workshop — how the event was publicized.

The leadership workshop was very much an STC leadership workshop. Although the theories and practices discussed invited broad application, the details — what I found to be the most useful part of the workshop — were based very much in the STC, not offering much specific help to other — invited — disciplines.

Despite the few minor issues, in total, the day did prove a great success. Dr. Damrau's knowledge and presentation skills ensured no one left empty handed. In addition, organizers of the event earn high marks, providing a comfortable venue and wonderful food. The workshop ended not with attendees fleeing to the beautiful weather awaiting them outside, but with private discussions about the day, additional questions for Dr. Damrau, exchanges of business cards, and a general feeling of community.

### Book review: *Re-ignite your passion for your work...*

Review by Sherri Henkin ([shenkin@amtrust.com](mailto:shenkin@amtrust.com))

*The Spark*, Created by Lyn Heyward and written by John U. Bacon, Doubleday; ISBN 0-385-51651-7

**The Spark** is ostensibly about Cirque du Soleil. Truly, though, this deceptively thin volume carries a strong message about creativity, about being inspired by and finding purpose in one's work. Although this is a fictional account, the basis for the story is true. *The Spark* is about Frank's quest to re-ignite his passion for his career. A successful sports agent, Frank had lost his enthusiasm amidst the meetings, routine calls, appointments, and other adult responsibilities in the quest to "make it."

In Las Vegas on business, Frank took a small side trip. He was searching for something and he was open to finding whatever the search revealed. "When people ask where my remarkable journey began, I tell them it was somewhere between the first and seventh doors." By opening the door, Frank embarked on an unexpected journey. He had entered the backstage door of Cirque du Soleil.

Cirque du Soleil embraces the philosophy that everyone must understand the show from all perspectives. At Cirque headquarters, there are show posters displayed in all of the hallways. Performers who have the day off are encouraged to attend a performance so they see it

from the audience's perspective. Even the kitchen staff attends rehearsals and shows. Otherwise, "they lose their connection to the final product ... If you don't understand the role you play, how can you be excited about what you're doing?" (p. 14)

While we may not be able to join up with Cirque du Soleil, we can travel with Frank. We watch the shows. Talk with the actors. Master some of the stunts. We learn about life from directors and coaches. We apply our own make-up, design sets. Yes, we do all of this because the writing style is so engaging. We feel the cold, snowy day in Montreal (even though it was 90 degrees outside while I was reading this). We discover — or rediscover "...the creative spark that burns within us all." (p. 135) We learn that "[w]hen we finally give voice to your dreams, you never know what's going to happen." (p. 42)

Go ahead and give voice to your dreams! Regain your passion! And start the journey with *The Spark*.

### Member profile: Lori Woods

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

Lori Woods is one of the lucky individuals who attended an NEO STC Software Saturday and received a free follow-up conference. Lori attended the Developing for XML/DITA workshop held last January with presenter Bernie Aschwanden. Bernie offered two free passes to Bright Path Solution's annual Framemaker Chautauqua that took place February 14-15, 2008 in Raleigh, North Carolina. Winners were selected by a drawing during the XML/DITA training in January. The Framemaker Chautauqua brought together Framemaker users for education and networking. More information on the Chautauqua is available at <http://www.brightpathsolutions.com/pages/conf/2008chaut/index.html>.

Lori's educational background includes a BA in English with minor in Scientific and Technical Communications from Bowling Green State University. Her advisors were Bonnie Fink and Gary Heba. She plans to receive an MA in Organizational Leadership with certification in Servant Leadership from Gonzaga University.

Currently planning to serve on the NEO STC Programs committee for 2008-2009, Lori has actively worked in the technical communication field since 1993. She worked as a contractor for over two years in various industries and worked for PPI Technical Pubs for 3 years before contracting. Prior to joining current employer Philips Medical Systems, Lori worked for Ohio Savings

Bank, developing help files for two departments. At her current job at Philips, Lori develops user manuals and on-line help files for CT scanners and software in addition to working on many localization projects. She can be reached at [lori.woods@philips.com](mailto:lori.woods@philips.com).

About the Framemaker Chautauqua she attended last February, Lori notes that she enjoyed the two-day event that brought together software users, certified experts, and consultants to exchange ideas and discuss applications of Adobe FrameMaker.

### Number of Paczulas Living in the United States Increases by 33%

*Akron, Ohio (AP\* newswire)* -- Robert and Anne Paczula announced that Anne has given birth to two healthy twin boys named Daniel Wojciech Paczula and Thomas Waldemar Paczula. This increases the number of Paczulas living in the United States from 6 to 8. When asked why two at once, the proud father said, "Since my sister got married and changed her name, we lost a Paczula, so we thought we'd make up for the difference."

The boys were born weighing 7 lbs 0 oz and 6 lbs 2 oz respectively and are a first step in a much greater plan. "After having our first son Alex to carry on the name," Robert explained, "I realized that, by using the law of exponential growth, we can eventually make 'Paczula' the most common name in the United States."

If those three boys grow up and each have three male children of their own, there will be a generation of nine Paczulas. Assuming those nine each have three boys, the next generation will have 27. In ten generations there will be a generation containing over 59,000 Paczulas. In 16 generations, there will be over 4.75 million Paczulas, shattering the current record of 3 million Smiths currently estimated to live in US.

When asked if the number of Smiths would also be increasing, he replied with "Sure they will, but they don't have the determination that we do. That name has had plenty of time to shine. It's time for a name with more style to take the reins."

Only time will tell if the grandiose plan will succeed. In the meantime, photos of the new family can be seen on their website at [www.paczula.com](http://www.paczula.com).

*\*AP is not the Associated Press, it's STC member Anne Paczula*

### Handy hint: Callouts in SnagIt 9

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

Have you upgraded to SnagIt 9? Do you occasionally find yourself thinking, "I like the new features of this tool, but sometimes I can't figure out how to things that were really simple in the previous versions?" If so, you're not alone. Recently I struggled with creating a text box — white text on a dark blue background. None of the text options in the SnagIt 9 Editor allowed me to change the background color.

After many minutes of sleuthing, I discovered that the Text tool is meant for plain text only. The options available with that tool allow you to alter the font, size, and color of the text.

What I really needed to use was the Callout tool. In addition to text editing, this tool allows changes to the background color, line width, and transparency. I had thought that callouts were only for speech bubbles and other "cutesy" effects, but plain rectangles are the first items in the list of available callouts. I made my text white and my background blue, and resized the callout to place on my image. Mystery solved!

### Around STC: Interesting articles

"Better Datasheets," by Richard Laurence Baron. See the Houston STC newsletter, Dateline, at <http://datelinehouston.wordpress.com/2007/12/>

"How much should a consultant cost?" at <http://www.captureplanning.com/articles/10827.cfm>?

Project planning tool: The dependency calculator on the ComTech website can be helpful: [http://www.comtech-serv.com/dependency\\_calculator.htm](http://www.comtech-serv.com/dependency_calculator.htm). You need the Java Runtime Environment (JRE) to run the calculator (available when you try to run the calculator).

### Renowned content management expert to headline Indianapolis STC meeting

Scott Abel, content management guru, will present "Stop wasting time: Ten things you can do to make yourself more efficient" at the Indiana chapter STC meeting on September 22, 2008.

Abel's presentation discusses ten of the biggest time-consuming tasks in a professional's day and how to accomplish them more efficiently. The presentation helps you reallocate time from tasks with no business value to tasks that help move your career forward.

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



Septem 2008 • Volume 25 Issue 1

Page 11

The meeting will be held at the William E. English Foundation building at 615 N. Alabama St. Suite 119 in downtown Indianapolis. The meeting will also be available remotely through the website [talkshoe.com](http://talkshoe.com).

Networking begins at 5:30 p.m. and the presentation begins at 6:30. Snacks will be provided. Admission is free and open to the public but registration is requested. Register to attend in person or online by September 15 at <http://www.stc-indiana.org/> or by e-mailing [STCIndianaPrez@gmail.com](mailto:STCIndianaPrez@gmail.com).

For more detail, see [www.stc-indiana.org](http://www.stc-indiana.org).

### Chapter reminders

#### 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.

#### 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 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>.