

# Lines & Letters

## Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



May 2015

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### NEO STC Community Officer Elections – 2015

Elections will be held May 14, 2015, at the Annual NEO STC Community Awards Banquet and Election.

Candidates for our 2015/2016 NEO STC officer positions are:

- ◆ Jill McCauslin: Vice President Candidate: Jill McCauslin
- ◆ Secretary Candidate: Claudia Thompson
- ◆ Treasurer Candidate: TBD

All voting members may vote for our candidates in person or by proxy at this meeting on May 14. 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 14 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 14 meeting, and would like to vote by proxy instead, please contact Paul Holland by May 12 to let him know who you are designating as your proxy to attend the meeting and vote in your place.

### There's a New Fellow in Town!

Congratulations are in order for Bob Young as the recipient of the honor of Fellow for the Society for Technical Communication (STC)! Bob is not only a devoted husband, dedicated father and talented technical writer, but has worked relentlessly and tirelessly for the betterment of the Northeast Ohio STC and STC for more than two decades. Bob is the first member of the NEO STC chapter to receive this prestigious honor. He earned the rank of Associate Fellow in 2011 for his nearly 20 years of service to his local chapter and the Society.

"I'm humbled and extremely honored to be recognized by my peers for this award," said Bob, who will be honored during a special ceremony in June at the STC's conference in Columbus, Ohio. "I believe in teamwork, and this honor is to be shared with many of our dedicated volunteers in the Society. STC has helped advance my career goals, and I'll continue to work for the ongoing success of the organization."

In making the announcement, STC said the Fellows Nominating Committee conferred this life-time achievement for Bob because he is "admired and respected greatly by your community and it is an honor to be able to officially recognize you for your years of service and enthusiasm."

He has served in numerous chapter offices, including president and co-chairperson of a Regional Conference in Cleveland, Ohio, and as a chapter liaison on an International-level committee.

"I've held many offices with the NEO STC Community. I was fortunate enough to implement many programs that contributed to the Community winning the membership drive competitions and Community of Distinction and Excellence. I initiated the member recognition, scholarship, and PR programs throughout the years. We have a terrific group of members who share in these successes."

He currently is serving his third year with the Community Affairs Committee (CAC), responsible for working with Region 4 chapter leaders. He also procures corporate sponsorship to fund NEO STC's annual scholarship program.

Bob has worked as a writer for nearly 30 years and specifically as a technical writer for the last 20. He has won multiple writing awards in his seven years at Rockwell Automation in Mayfield Heights, Ohio, where he now works as a Senior Information Developer. Bob also was an accomplished sports writer for two daily newspapers after receiving his Journalism degree from Ohio University in Athens, Ohio.

Bob, an avid boater and fisherman in Lake Erie, resides with his wife, Carol, in North Canton, Ohio. The couple, who have been married for 34 years, have a son, David, 27, and a daughter, Sandie, 25.

### Amy Vogt Honored as Associate Fellow!

If you have ever worked with Amy Vogt, you know she is the greatest. Now, congratulations are in order as she achieves the honorary rank of STC Associate Fellow. Here are some of the great things said about Amy in her Associate Fellow nomination materials.

#### A great leader.

Amy's leadership in the Northeast Ohio STC (NEO STC) chapter shows that dedication and enthusiasm can draw people together to achieve greatness. NEO STC won both Chapter of Distinction and Pacesetter awards the

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year Amy was President, which, prior to 2009, was unheard of.

She is like the piper of technical communication. Whenever the NEO STC chapter members along with Amy gathered at Summits or other events, many people outside of the chapter followed and wanted to be part of the group. Amy was successful in encouraging many coworkers and vendors to become STC members. Amy took time out of her busy schedule to meet with many people for lunch or coffee to simply talk about technical communication and the possibilities for a career.

### **So many awards and so much fun.**

Amy has won many awards through her employers because of her innate ability to put herself in the customer's shoes, and create training materials that greatly benefit them. Her employers have praised Amy's dedication, teamwork, and professionalism, which enhanced the value of their organizations.

Amy's promotion of technical communication careers to students at Northeast Ohio universities shows her dedication about the future of technical communication. By showing them how diverse and exciting the possibilities are, Amy creates a desire to learn about this field that would not have existed otherwise.

Amy's fun side brings technical communicators together, both at business meetings and social events. This fun side is exemplified in Amy's appearance as Incoming President in the spoof STC video, "Subject to Control."

### **What else can we say about Amy?**

Currently, she is a Senior Training and Development Specialist with University Hospitals (UH) in Cleveland, Ohio. In her 5 years with University Hospitals, her responsibilities have ranged from technical writing for clinical and business applications to instructional design and training. Amy was the team lead for the change management and training associated with UH's 2013 Oracle upgrade and she is currently working to integrate two major hospitals into UH in 2015.

Before joining UH, Amy spent more than 16 years at PPI Technical Communications as a Project Manager, Quality Assurance Manager, Translation Services Manager, Instructional Designer, Graphic Designer, and Production Manager. She is a graduate of Kenyon College.

Amy has spent her career dedicated to writing and serving the STC at both the local and international levels. When she is not working, Amy spends time hiking with her husband, Steve, and her Chocolate Labrador,

Gus. Amy and Steve love to travel and have visited many ski destinations around the world.

## **A New Global Perspective**

### *(Interview with Lynn Nickels)*

Lynn Nickels recently traveled to give presentations abroad. Lines & Letters asked her a few questions.

### **Why did you travel to Singapore and Australia?**

I was invited by Content Marketing Institute Co-founder Joe Pulizzi to have coffee. I had met him at the Content Marketing World Conference in Cleveland last September. During the last session, I went up and introduced myself and he invited me to join him for lunch. We followed up a month later with coffee and I invited my manager, Jodi Sourini, to join us. Joe is sort of the "guru" of Content Marketing and Rockwell Automation would like to keep a close relationship with him, as we are incorporating a lot of Content Marketing into our marketing deliverables, now.

We are trying to get our foot in the door sooner in the Buyer's Journey or Customer Journey. Typically, customers have already gone more than 60% through their personal buying journey before they even contact a company to purchase a product. We want to get into that conversation with them a lot sooner so that we can encourage them to purchase our products earlier in their journey. Content Marketing is a new way for us to do that. During that initial lunch, I spoke to Joe about some of the new ways Rockwell Automation is incorporating Content Marketing into our marketing deliverables and he was intrigued. During our follow-up coffee meeting, he invited Jodi and I to speak at the upcoming Content Marketing World Asia Conferences about what we were doing. Business-to-business (B2B) companies have specific challenges in marketing that Business-to-Customer (B2C) companies do not—like smaller marketing budgets and less public awareness about your brand, among other obstacles within the company itself. Content Marketing Asia included two conference stops; one at Content Marketing Sydney, Mar. 16-18th, and one in Singapore, at Content Marketing Asia on March 19th and 20th. So, I guess it was just a matter of being in the right place at the right time and always being willing to be a cheerleader and champion for what your company does! It has been an amazing experience! <http://www.sydneycontentmarketingworld.com/>, <http://asiacontentmarketing.com/>

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### What topics did you cover?

Jodi and I did two joint-presentations and I participated on a technology panel, as well. Our first topic was, "7 Ways to Gain Support for Content Marketing in a B2B Company," in which we discussed the challenges that business-to-business companies have in gaining buy-in for content marketing. Many marketing managers are resistant to change and have always done things the same way. Also, we spoke about our doing Voice of Customer research to find out what our customers and sales force need in the way of marketing materials so that we can make our deliverables more effective. How do you use technical documentation that already exists in your organization to make content marketing materials from them? This saves resources and time, which was of great interest, since all companies have technical documentation and training materials, and are at the same time, downsizing their workforces.

The second was, "The Content Marketing Toolbox," in which we talked about how changing your message delivery system can bring fresh life to an existing marketing message without changing a company's brand identity. We explained in detail some of the new software applications and ways we are incorporating content marketing through video, animated presentations (Powtoon), Brainsharks, SnapApp interactive surveys, social media, and more. We opened this up at the end of our presentation for the audience to share with us some new innovations they are using as well.

The third was an invitation to participate in a technology panel discussion, "What do Content Marketers Need in the Toolbox?" facilitated by CMI co-founder Robert Rose. I volunteered for this one since I have a technical background in computers and in technical writing. The panel included other participants from Twitter, Brightcove, and Edelman. In addition to the tools we use, we discussed a new role that is emerging called the Marketing Technologist. I'm very passionate about this topic, having a dual background in technology and marketing, and hope to follow this up with an article in Intercom in the near future!

### How has your perspective changed now?

It's very interesting to speak to an ESL audience. And it was a huge surprise to me that the audiences I spoke to did speak English as a first language, but not necessarily American English as I know it. My manager and I both come from the same region, but that was one comment that we received. Some audience members in Australia

could understand her more easily than me. They asked if we were from different regions! Interestingly, she is from the Cleveland area and I'm from the Youngstown area, so there are definitely subtle differences in how we speak, even though it's not apparent to us. My training in Toastmasters helped some, but I was surprised to find that the Content Marketing Institute strategy in public speaking is centered around engaging your audience in a more entertaining manner and moving around the stage a lot, which is not the way Toastmasters encourages you to speak. That was a challenge for me, so I had to remember to add more movement during my time on stage. CMW conferences open up with loud music and are very upbeat, so we tried to continue that theme in our presentation as well, but, honestly, B2B marketing doesn't normally tend to be all that exciting, so that was somewhat of a hurdle for us!

In Singapore, where they speak "Singlish," we were told to speak very slowly so that they could understand us. Additionally, when speaking to an Asian audience, you must be very formal in your presentation techniques. They are a more serious bunch and tend not to joke as much as we might. Also, toning down a bit when we were in Singapore—the other speakers found it challenging to do this, too. Part of speaking in an entertaining manner includes jokes, and many of the jokes by the other speakers were not met with the expected responses. Another cultural difference in Asia Pacific is the practice of not asking questions in public. At the end of our presentations, we opened up to the audience for questions but didn't get a lot of participation. We found that audience members were more comfortable in approaching us later, in a more private setting, to ask their questions and give us feedback. Also – DON'T CHEW GUM! It's against the law in Singapore—to the tune of a \$1,000 fine! It's not called "A FINE City" for no reason.

Culturally, we tried to include experiences that were common to them. For example, our presentation included the thought of "do you want fries with that burger?" In Australia and Singapore, they don't use the term "fries," they use the term "chips" due to these countries' British origins. So, we quickly changed our presentation text to "do you want chips with that burger!" Other speakers included native references when talking about television and movies – like using references to Crocodile Dundee.

In conclusion – always be a champion for what you do. You never know who is taking notice! I can't express

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how fortunate I feel to have had this opportunity! The cultural experience has been priceless, as well as the public speaking experience I was able to gain. The people in Australia and Singapore are truly amazing and delightful—very friendly and willing to talk about their respective cultures.

Jodi and I also conducted training at our offices in Singapore about the new Content Marketing tools we are using. Additionally, we were able to conduct Voice of Sales research with our co-workers in our Melbourne and Sydney offices with reference to our marketing deliverables. Whether you are creating marketing or technical deliverables, web sites or training materials, I cannot underscore enough the importance of doing VOC research to make sure that the deliverables you are creating are what your audience needs and uses! There is always a constant need for improvement in these areas and you don't know what you don't know! The only way to find out is to ask your audience.

### **“Using Scenarios” Presentation in demand across STC!**

Kim Lindsey is presenting a webinar on “Using Scenarios to Help People Learn” for the Instructional Design and Learning SIG on May 21. She gave this presentation to NEO STC in January. If you missed her talk or you would like to hear it again, you can sign up for the IDL SIG webinar on their website. [The recording of this webinar is now available for IDL SIG members on the [SIG website](#).]

Kim also presented this topic at the 2015 Mid-Atlantic Technical Communication Conference (hosted by the STC Philadelphia Metro Chapter) in March, and she will be leading an Instructional Design progression table at the STC Summit in June. Check out the Summit schedule for details.

Below is an article she contributed with links to items from her presentation.

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In January, I gave a presentation on using scenarios at our monthly chapter meeting. This article contains links to the resources mentioned during that talk – blogs, tools, and training resources that I've relied on while building expertise with this training format.

- ◆ Cathy Moore: [“Making Change” blog](#); [“Scenario Design: In-depth and Hands-on” certificate course](#)

- ◆ Ray Jimenez: [“Vignettes” blog](#); [“Scenario-Based Learning” certificate course](#); [“Story-Based Learning” certificate course](#); has also offered a “Story-based Technical & Compliance eLearning Design Workshop” in past years
- ◆ Karl Kapp: [Kapp Notes blog](#); teaches at [Bloomsburg University's Institute for Interactive Technologies \(IIT\)](#)
- ◆ ATD course [“Essentials of Scenario-Based eLearning”](#)
- ◆ [BranchTrack](#) cloud-based scenario design tool
- ◆ Mind-mapping tools: [XMind](#); [FreeMind](#); [Mind Meister](#)
- ◆ [“Wired for Story” Ted Talk](#)
- ◆ [“Made to Stick” book](#) by Chip & Dan Heath

The list above is a good sampling, but there are many, many other sources – almost too many to count! Start here and build your own knowledge, then join the trend toward scenario-based learning. There are always more stories to tell!

### **Achieving Success Conference from PMI**

On June 3, 2015, the Project Management Institute NEO Chapter is hosting their annual Professional Development Day. This year, the theme is “Achieving Success.” The event features two renowned speakers and can earn up to 7 Professional Development Units for those who are certified with Project Management Institute.

Please see [the organization's website](#) for more information.