

Lines & Letters

Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



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President's Column

Dear Readers,

I wrote last month that we submitted the annual Community Achievement Award application to STC International. The community achievement award (CAA) program recognizes STC communities and special interest groups (SIGs) for exceptional accomplishments in meeting goals set by STC International. The award not only acknowledges that the obligations of a properly functioning community and SIG have been met, but that the winning communities and SIGs have performed well beyond expectations.

I am proud to formally announce and congratulate the NEO STC Community for achieving the Community of Distinction award for 2013: "For outreach to the community, non-members, and members through service, promotional activities, and member recognition."

There are three CAA recognition levels (Community of Merit, Community of Excellence, and Community of Distinction), and the Community of Distinction is the highest level of achievement. The NEO STC community has been recognized annually by International for the CAA for over 10 years, and we last achieved a Community of Distinction in 2009.

This achievement is possible due to the hard work and efforts of our NEO community volunteers. Our volunteers orchestrate monthly educational programs, participate in community outreach activities, plan annual competitions, organize networking lunches, run bi-monthly book clubs, stay connected with academic programs, publicize our community to the public, set up workshops and webinars, welcome new members, write newsletter articles, seek sponsors, maintain a website, and much more! Thank you to our volunteers!

We will be presented with the award at the Honors Banquet at the Technical Communication Summit in Atlanta in May, and will recognize this achievement at our own NEO STC Annual Community Awards Banquet and Election in May. If you are attending the Summit, we welcome you to share in this achievement with us! Otherwise (or in addition!), please join us in May for our local celebration!

In other news, our semi-annual board meeting took place at the Warrensville Heights Library on January 28. Meeting minutes are being finalized and are available to

NEO STC members upon request. We discussed progress on our committee plans for the 2012-13 year, and any new or modified plans.

If you ever have comments, questions, or suggestions about NEO STC, or you're interested in becoming a community volunteer, please write to me (jbvoss@parker.com). I look forward to seeing you again soon at an NEO STC event!

Janean Voss

NEO STC Community President

Kelly Graham Honored as Associate Fellow

Congratulations go to Kelly Graham on achieving the honorary rank of STC Associate Fellow.



Since joining the STC in 1992, her participation in the NEO STC has been a positive influence on the chapter and has moved us forward in our goal of promoting and sustaining the role of technical communicators in our community. Her spirit of volunteerism has

greatly benefited our chapter over the years, and we thank her for it. We would like to recognize her specifically for outstanding performance in the following areas:

- ◆ Respected editor and technical communicator for 23 years at Rockwell Automation.
- ◆ Involved with judging publications at the local and international level since 1990 and judging for the scholarship since 2010.
- ◆ Resurrected the chapter newsletter, which received a Merit Award in 1994, and a Distinguished Technical Communication Award and Best of Show in 1995. Chapter newsletters are judged only at the international level.
- ◆ Spearheaded a two-day Region 4 conference that contributed to the chapter earning an STC Chapter Pacesetter Award in 1997.
- ◆ Served as Community President (1995-1997). The success the chapter has enjoyed in recent years is partly due to her steady leadership and vision for membership growth. During her tenure as president, she set a defining tone for member involvement by establishing the NEO STC election process for a

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three-year commitment (vice-president, president, immediate past president), and launched the chapter's awards program.

- ◆ Earned the Distinguished Chapter Service Award, Northeast Ohio, in 1999.

Her experience and wisdom have been invaluable to the NEO STC. We hope she will continue to be a crucial part of our community for years to come.

This work with STC tells just part of the story about Kelly's huge contributions involving volunteer work. Do you know about her volunteer work with saving retired racing Greyhounds? Kelly began placing senior Greyhounds in 1999 when she founded Golden Years Senior Greyhounds.

Concerning her work with Greyhounds today, Kelly says, "I'm the queen of networking when it comes to placing dogs." She is also involved with the rescue and placement of puppy mill dogs, including Italian Greyhounds, Chihuahuas, and miniature Dachshunds.

NEO STC Scholarship in Technical Communication

We are delighted to announce a scholarship that the NEO STC community is offering to a deserving student or technical communication practitioner.

This scholarship, to be used expressly for educational or professional development purposes, is designed to encourage local academic excellence, provide our profession with educated communicators, and promote greater awareness of and participation in STC.

Applicants will be evaluated based on their potential to contribute to the profession following attainment of their degree, certificate, or specified professional development opportunity. **The scholarship committee will accept applications until April 1, 2013**, and will notify the winner by May 1, 2013.

For details and to download an application or promotional poster, visit the 2013 Scholarship page. We eagerly await and highly encourage Ohio's best technical communication students and practitioners to apply.

Submit an Article - Win an E-reader!

E-reader Starting April 1, 2013, when you submit an article to Lines & Letters (either via Joomla or newsletter@neostc.org), you will be entered in our drawing to win an e-reader.

NEO STC members can submit an article from April 1, 2013, to November 30, 2013, to be eligible. (The drawing will be held at the December meeting.) You will receive an entry for each article you submit.

The winners of our last drawing were Tricia Spayer and Barb Philbrick. If you attend the STC Summit or the Spectrum conference, an article would be great. A book, webinar, blog, or article review would also be wonderful.

While this promotion begins on April 1, it is the real deal, we promise!

Talk of the Town

Ginny Haas, Account Executive at Radcom, Inc., is a recipient of the Sales and Marketing Executives International (SMEI) of Akron/Canton ***Distinguished Sales & Marketing Award®*** (DSMA®). This award recognizes top local sales and marketing professionals for their achievements. The presentation of the award to Ginny was on February 26 at Tangier Restaurant.

Recently unveiled was the site for the **Professional Writing** program at John Carroll University (<http://sites.jcu.edu/professionalwriting/>). The site notes that a highlight of the new writing track is that it "opens up a number of professional writing careers, including medical science writing, technical writing...and more." **Dr. Tom Pace** at tpace@jcu.edu is the contact.

Jeanette Evans, STC Associate Fellow, had her book review of *From Idea to Print: How to Write a Technical Book or Article and Get It Published* recently appear in *Technical Communication*.

From the Editors: March is Here

Looking back, January and February of this year provided us with the chance to attend some great NEO STC meetings and get involved with NEO STC and STC in other ways such as attending webinars and networking lunches.

Looking forward, March brings the chance for more great meetings and events as well as the chance to apply for our scholarship.

In addition to working on our scholarship, our NEO STC Academic Relations Committee recently interviewed contacts at Ohio schools to see how we can best work together. These schools include CSU, JCU, Miami, YSU, and others. Dr. Jay Gordon at YSU is one of the contacts we interviewed. He noted in his interview with NEO STC that his students are interested in internship

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opportunities. Fortunately, NEO STC recently helped a YSU student secure an internship with a Northeast Ohio company.

If you know of an internship opportunity, please let jeanette.evans@sbcglobal.net know so we can pass the information on to interested students.

Speaking of connecting with students, an idea coming out of our NEO STC winter board meeting is that you might enjoy following and liking on Facebook the interesting YSU page for the Professional Writing and Editing program.

As for the Bulwer-Lytton contest entry in our last newsletter, the author of the Columbo entry turns out to be the talented and most inspiring Tricia Spayer.

Program Meeting Presentations

Some of our monthly speakers have shared their presentation slides with us. Look under "Professional Resources" on the top navigation bar for Program Meeting Presentations. Please note that all presentations are available for personal use only.

David Pogue Is Summit Keynote

The keynote speaker for the upcoming STC Summit, David Pogue, has a most impressive background.

The New York Times technology columnist, Missing Manual publisher, NOVA ScienceNow PBS series developer, and CBS News correspondent has a great site at <http://www.davidpogue.com/> full of information about his columns, books, TV shows, videos, bios, photos, and speaking information.

David is originally from Shaker Heights, Ohio, and has been known to let people in NEO STC be his friend on Facebook (at least one is an editor for Lines & Letters).

Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest

NEO STC will not be hosting a Bulwer-Lytton fiction contest this year. However, if you were inspired by any of our previous contest entries recently posted in the newsletter, you can still submit your own original entry to the international competition. The official deadline is April 15. For submission details (and lists of winning entries), see <http://www.bulwer-lytton.com/>.

Getting More Views and Traffic

By Jeanette Evans

If you get tasked, as I was, with increasing and keeping interest in a blog, you might do what I did and search for ideas on how to get more views and traffic. This particular request relates to the blog concerning work at Tri-C in connection with a Title III grant to enhance distance learning at the school with <http://title3.wordpress.com/> being the blog location. In my journey for tips, I came across the <http://en.support.wordpress.com/getting-more-views-and-traffic/> site. Here are two tips that stuck out in my mind.

- ◆ **Tell people in your social networks.** Telling people in your social network about new posts and about the blog in general I think is a good idea. "You can do this using WordPress.com's Publicize feature, which will automatically tell your Twitter followers and Facebook friends as soon as you publish a new post."
- ◆ **Bug your real-life friends.** "Encourage friends and family to read your blog: send them reminder emails when you update and talk to them about it when you meet in person. Better still, encourage them to sign up for updates using the Follow Blog Widget. Often having a really small audience of people you care about is better than having a million visitors and not knowing any of them."

Whether you are in my social networks (I think NEO STC counts) or are one of my real-life friends, if you visit, you could find something of interest in the content area and/or as a vehicle of communication. This was an NEO STC award winner in the online communication category a few years ago, and if you scroll down the right-hand side you will see the familiar to us NEO STC logo and announcement.

I would also look forward to your ideas about areas for improvement. We created the blog so grant awardees at institutions worldwide could learn from our best practices and have access to our documentation and experiences administering the grant. We also wanted a transparent forum so anyone in the local or college community could ask questions of our committee members about our activities and to demonstrate our fiscal responsibility. Hoping you visit the <http://title3.wordpress.com/> blog location.

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More Tech Comm Blogs

By Jeanette Evans



After recently googling technical communication blogs - as many of you probably have - what I found is that STC's Notebook includes at <http://notebook.stc.org/links/#01> an interesting list of blogs.

Kevin Cuddihy pens the STC's Notebook blog. As STC Media Manager, Kevin calls himself "one of the friendly and smiling staff members at the main STC offices in Fairfax, Virginia (referred to as Stately STC Manor in the blog)."

How he groups tech com blogs by STC member, non-STC member, and Mindtouch's Top 25 Most Influential Technical Communication Bloggers seems interesting to me. Here are some of the blogs that caught my attention.

In the Mindtouch list is an eclectic mix of staples such as the actively updated blogs of Tom Johnson and Scott Abel, and some blogs that have very few recent entries or that concentrate effectively on a particular subject. Two blogs that are effective are the ones from RJ Jacquez who concentrates on Adobe/elearning and Julie Norris who concentrates on social networking writing.

Eclectic again is the word that came to my mind with the STC member lists. This list also has actively maintained blogs and those that have few recent entries. John Hedtke's actively updated blog about writing in general appears on this list. Linda Oestreich has a similar blog that she keeps active.

In the non-STC member list is the Adobe blog at the <http://blogs.adobe.com/techcomm/> location. This blog features, as expected, news about Adobe products and their use plus a few entries about general tech com issues, such as the one with JoAnn Hackos on predicting DITA cost savings, stating "Our November 19th webinar with Dr. JoAnn Hackos of The Center for Information-Development Management (CIDM) covered an insightful strategy in determining how to accurately predict cost savings with DITA. This issue has been a key "bug-a-boo" with many customers, who know that they need to move to DITA, but who need a compelling business case."