

TECH *Trends*

Orlando Chapter of the Society For Technical Communication

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STC

What's My Line?

By Gwen Thomas

It is a truth universally acknowledged that a technical communicator has probably held many other jobs. To test this truth, we asked the technical communicators attending the December meeting to divulge their previous occupations.

Many of these occupations fall under the broad category of writing and publishing. We have been magazine writers, editors, and publishers, typesetters, college textbook editors, freelance biographers, and book packagers. While doing public relations work, we have written press releases, ghosted magazine articles, booked clients on radio and television shows, set up media tours, handled press relations, created advertising media, and produced newsletters.

We've organized and put on seminars and workshops. Many of us are experienced public speakers. We include former journalists, both print and radio/TV.

Our current and/or former educators have taught at the university, community college, vocational schools, secondary, elementary, and pre-school levels.

We've worked as bank loan officers, futures traders, licensed stockbrokers, mortgage processors, credit bureau auditors, entertainment accountants, and court interpreters. We've been receptionists, administrative assistants, supervisors, and office managers.

We have among us a former firefighter and a water chemist. We've drilled holes in roads for asphalt thickness tests, laid phone wires, tested road and bank vault concrete for slump and compression, and driven construction tractors. We've been a certified marijuana sniffer and a federally certified emissions evaluator.

We bring to our profession first-hand knowledge of the service and food industries. We've been an auto detailer, a pool attendant, and a night watchman. We've worked in restaurants, ice cream parlors, and fast food

establishments. We've sold women's lingerie, men's clothing, and sheet music.

Several of our members have been in the military, including the Air Force, the Air National Guard, the Navy, and the Merchant Marines, serving on a variety of ships, in nuclear missile silos, and on guard duty. We've been strategic planners and worked in military research and development. As civilians, many of us have worked—or currently work—with the defense industry.

And, we're performers. We've sung rock, opera, musical comedy, in choirs, and in caberet acts. We've acted, directed and served as stage manager, production manager, costumer, and sound technician.

Only three of us planned to be technical writers.

Our training includes several technical communications degrees along with varying degrees in English, Communications, and Journalism. We hold degrees in Theatre, Music Theory/Composition, Bio-Chemistry, Philosophy of History, Radio/TV/Film, Nuclear Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Economics, and Business.

Eighteen of us agreed to reveal how long we had been in technical communications. Our in-field experience ranges from six months to 22 years.

If you have a subject-matter question, chances are you can find an STC member with an answer. ✪

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A Note from the President . . .

By Dick Hughes

Can you believe it? Another year has gone by and here we are in 1997! Well, here's hoping everyone had a wonderful holiday season and will have a happy and prosperous new year.

Speaking of holidays, I'd like to extend a word of thanks to chapter guru Bruce Cone, chapter vice president Charlotte Salvesson, and chapter secretary Paul Lockwood for combining their talents in coordinating our December third holiday dinner meeting at the 4th Fighter

Group Restaurant. It was good to see many of you there, the food was great, and Bruce and Paul did a wonderful job of providing some "interactive" entertainment. Paul outdid himself with his selection of holiday door prizes, and almost outdid all of us at his table with his puns. I'm already looking forward to next year's holiday meeting.

And while I'm handing out kudos, I'd like to commend chapter treasurer W.C. Wiese on his daring exploits in taking our rather mundane chapter financial management to a new level of efficiency. Not only has W.C. fully computerized our budgeting and reporting process, he has also worked with our bank to change our account status so we don't have to pay bank charges anymore. He also has investigated and opened a separate account for some of our surplus funds to enable the chapter to earn more interest. Thank you W.C.!

As 1997 opens, we have some great meetings planned for you. This month's meeting on

"Tool Wars" promises to be very interesting and informative. In February, we're going to look at one company's process for implementing documentation delivery on CD-ROM. March is the month for a tour of UCF's newly equipped technical writing lab, a computer-lover's dream. And for April's meeting, we will be learning about Internet providers and Web page development. As you can see from this lineup of programs, it's going to be a great year!

Finally, I'd like to ask all of you to consider something. Later this month, we will be activating our chapter's Nominating Committee to begin developing a slate of officers for election to office for the 1997-98 chapter year. Since I promised Immediate Past President Bill Paskert that I would relieve him of that post next year, the chapter will need your help in guiding us to the next century. I ask you to consider contributing a little of your time, either to an elected position or to one of our several active committees. ☒

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You may reprint original material appearing in *Tech Trends* if you acknowledge the author and source and send us a copy of the publication containing the reprint.

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Spotlight on Membership

By Lori Corbett

During the Fall STC Membership drive, we added quite a few members to our ranks for a total chapter membership of 116 (as of copy deadline for this issue):

- ☐ **New student members include:** Lauren L. Cottrell, Kelly A. Moore, Christine A. Newkirk, Joy L. Hanson, Wilma E. Lopez, V. Michele Damron, Elizabeth Lashley, Christina M. Longacre, Sharon K. Wissert
- ☐ **New members include:** Matthew P. Livesay, Michael A. Sedlak, Marylin K. Sheddian, Hank Brain, Martin S. Godwin
- ☐ **Members transferring to Orlando include:** Margery Jane Bowerman, Isabell Kyrk, Kathy A. Rogers, and Donna M. Mitchell.
- ☐ **New Senior Member:** According to the Society bylaws, the grade of senior member is conferred automatically on each member after five years of membership in

the Society. Congratulations to Ann Parker for achieving this honor. She will receive a Senior Member Certificate from STC and her name will appear in the Tieline newsletter.

Welcome to all of you; we look forward to seeing you at an upcoming meeting! ☒

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- Technical Resource Center
- PaySys International, Inc.
- HTE, Inc.
- Infotech (Gainesville)

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Regional News and Views: Wrapping Up 1996

By Mark Hanigan, Director-Sponsor

It seems like yesterday that I began my term as your Director-Sponsor, but here it is—the home stretch. You now have the opportunity to choose between two excellent candidates: Michelle Ratcliffe and Dan Wise. My next column will feature both of these terrific STCers. But, one more time, let me wish you all in Region 3 a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and Happy New Year! In trying to keep with my tradition of the past two years, I'll try not to be too long winded.

Strongest Regional Conference Agendas

1996 has been another excellent year for our region. We continue to provide the strongest conference agenda in STC:

- ❑ Atlanta's Currents implemented a new format, resulting in strong attendance.
- ❑ April's first ever Region 3 Student Conference was a huge success at Mercer University. Student attendance approached 100.
- ❑ The last ever Florida Technical Communication Conference was held in March, in conjunction with Florida's Technical Communication Week. This conference is moving to the fall with a revamped format and a new name: Trends.
- ❑ We wrapped up the conference year on a sentimental note as the Practical Conference On Communication (PCOC) celebrated its 20th anniversary in Knoxville this past October.

Regional Recognition

Our region received well-deserved recognition:

- ❑ Three chapters (Mid South, Suncoast, and Tennessee Tech) were nominated for Chapter Achievement Awards. The Suncoast Chapter and the Tennessee Tech Student Chapter received the 1996 Chapter Achievement Awards.

- ❑ Mercer University and Space Tech received Pacesetter awards for their concerted efforts in putting together the first ever regional student conference.

- ❑ Carol N. Carter from Mercer University and Sarah A. de Agüero from University of South Florida were both elected to the STC Honor Society Sigma Tau Chi.

- ❑ The International Technical Art Competition was hosted by the Middle Tennessee Chapter, and the International Online Communication Competition was hosted by the Suncoast Chapter. In addition, many of us from virtually all chapters contributed our time, energies, and talents as judges in competitions at the chapter, region, and international levels.

- ❑ Outstanding individual efforts were formally recognized at the Society level: Shirley Anderson Hancock, Mid South Chapter (Fellow); Kenneth T Rainey, Atlanta Chapter (Associate Fellow); and Howerd J Scheiber, Space Tech Chapter (Associate Fellow).

- ❑ Outstanding individual efforts were formally recognized at the chapter level through 20 Distinguished Chapter Service Awards.

- ❑ Fred O'Hara of the East Tennessee Chapter received a Director Sponsor Award at PCOC for his incredible lifetime contributions to STC at all levels.

- ❑ Julie Bommarito was recognized for her efforts in management positions for four different conferences!

- ❑ Last, but not least, we saluted and supported the efforts of 19 fantastic chapter presidents and their respective administrative councils! ❖



Chapter Notes Holiday Meeting

By Paul Lockwood

Members and guests enjoyed a social gathering at the 4th Fighter Group restaurant. As they dined, each attendee attempted to fill a questionnaire with signatures of as many attendees as possible. Finding individuals who would agree with statement like, "I actually like Barry Manilow" or "I got lost trying to find the restaurant" was not always an easy task, but it was fun.

The after-dinner program featured the comedic reading of a portion of a "Downsizing Christmas" memo Paul Lockwood found in the newsletter of another organization and compiling several demographic lists. (See "What's My Line on page 1 for details.")

The meeting was capped off with door prizes. And the winners were—Dan Jones, Charlotte Salvesson, Joanie Nelson, Bill Paskert, Adrian LaSala, and Susan Werly. ❖

Administrative Council

By Paul Lockwood

These notes are a compilation from the November 21st and December 12th meetings.

The Region 3 Student Technical Communication Conference is being cosponsored by several Florida STC chapter, including ours.

We are receiving some Society-wide publicity for our **TRENDS 97** conference, which is featured in an article in the November/December issue of *Tieline*, a newsletter for STC leaders.

Finally, UCF student Stacy Romer has completed her efforts on the Employers Directory. The directory lists many of the employers of technical communicators in the local area. ❖

Coming Up . . .



DATE	TOPIC	LOCATION
Jan. 29	<p>Chapter Meeting: Tool Wars, Panel Discussion of Online Help Tools 6:30 p.m. — Members: \$5.00 / Nonmembers: \$7.00. R.S.V.P. to Charlotte Salveson at csalveson@paysys.com or 407-660-0343.</p>	<p>Winter Park Civic Center 1050 W. Morse Blvd. Winter Park, FL</p>
Feb. 1	<p>Florida STC Publications Competition Awards Reception Tour: 3:30–5:30 p.m.—Display: 4–6:30 p.m.—Winner’s Reception & Awards Presentation: 6:30–7:30. \$25.00 per person by January 17th. Send check or money order (payable to STC Suncoast Chapter) to Tracey Bryant, c/o Price Waterhouse, P.O. Box 30004, Tampa, FL 33630 3004. For more information, call Tracey Bryant at (813) 348 7013</p>	<p>Florida Aquarium Tampa, FL</p>
Feb. 1	<p>Deadline for submitting articles for the February issue of <i>Tech Trends</i>.</p>	
Feb. 26	<p>Chapter Meeting: CD-ROM — How to Get There from Here 6:30 p.m. — Members: \$5.00 / Nonmembers: \$7.00 R.S.V.P. to Charlotte Salveson at csalveson@paysys.com or 407-660-0343.</p>	<p>Winter Park Civic Center 1050 W. Morse Blvd. Winter Park, FL</p>
April 5	<p>Region 3 Conference—Currents 96: Rising to the Challenge For registration information, visit the conference web site at http://www.osoft.com/stc_atlanta/currents/register.html</p>	<p>Mercer University Atlanta, GA</p>