TECH

TRENDS

A Note from the President . . .

We're Off and Running

by Lori Corbett

This year has started off with quite a bang! Beginning with the JoAnn Hackos seminar in July (with the best meeting attendance in my memory) and continuing with "serious fun" at Washline V in August, we have had a great opportunity to learn about trends in our field and have fun at the same time. By the way, many thanks to all the contributors on the Washline panel.
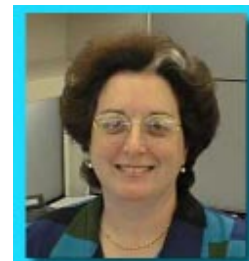
If you missed the August meeting, I strongly suggest you take a moment to view Dan Voss' summary comments gleaned from STC's 46th Annual Conference, which are posted on the Education Committee's web site (*http://stc.org/region3/orl/eduhompg.html*). And while you are looking at the Education Committee's web site, be sure to check out the information about the High School Technical Writing Competition.

As your chapter president, I have several goals for our chapter this year:

- Publish a membership directory
- Create a Public Relations Committee to publicize our chapter's accomplishments
- Start a listserv for our membership
- Revitalize our connection and commitment to student members at UCF.

Dr. Dan Jones has offered to organize and moderate a listserv for our membership. Since many other chapters provide this type of service, we envision the listserv to be a local version of the techwriter list, in which members can share information, ask questions, and provide solutions to facilitate and

enhance our professional lives. I have personally benefited from the Suncoast chapter's list when Conference Support Committee posted some questions earlier this year. Of course, subscribing to the list is voluntary, open only to registered members of the STC Orlando Chapter. Look for more information about the Orlando Chapter listserv in the near future.

Also, I am happy to announce that Beth Gerber has graciously agreed to serve as the Student Liaison to UCF. Beth is a senior in the Technical Writing Program at UCF. I have already had the opportunity to work with Beth as we trooped around the Dolphin and Swan hotels when she was researching information for a future article that will appear in an upcoming *Intercom*. Beth will be a great asset to our chapter, as she ensures that the student population of our membership is well represented.

The Orlando Chapter is very much in need of an active Public Relations Committee, especially with the upcoming STC Annual Conference next May.

Inside this issue:

Did you know that working on the Public Relations Committee is an excellent way to enhance your resume and portfolio, and that STC sponsors a society-level Public Relations Competition? Several committees already create material that is suitable for inclusion in this competition, but it needs some folks to create additional items and to organize and manage the process for submission. It would be great if we could have a chapter flyer or brochure available at the Annual Conference. Most likely, lots of folk from the Central Florida area will attend who might not know about all the professional activities and opportunities our chapter sponsors. If you have any interest in working on the Public Relations Committee, PLEASE contact me soon.

As a final note, I want to remind all nonmembers that if you would like to join STC, but think that you should wait until next year because you'd only have to pay your dues again in January, have I got news for you! If you join any time after October 1, the membership dues you pay will carry your membership through next year. And if you plan on attending the Annual Conference as a nonmember, your conference registration is increased by the same amount as a one-year membership. I strongly urge everyone to seriously consider joining STC before the end of the year. ❖

TECH TRENDS

Tech. Writing News from UCF

The Faculty
The current technical writing faculty—Dan Jones, Madelyn Flammia, David Gillette, Paul Dombrowski, and J.D. Applen—were joined this fall by three new colleagues—Karla Kitalong (Michigan Tech), Melody Bowdon (University of Arizona), and Barry Mauer (University of Florida). All three faculty were hired to help teach some of the current courses, to help teach courses in the university's new Honors College, and to help plan the English Department's proposed Ph.D. program in Texts and Technology.

The Students
Four graduate students successfully defended their theses or projects this July and were graduated from the Master's program—Debbie Andrisani, Michele Damron, Anna Gaal, and Jessica Marsland. Twelve undergraduates received their Bachelor of Arts in English in May or August—Kelli Cooper, Nicole Griffin, Brian Hagan, Michael Hayes, Cynthia Martin, Makala Simone, Melyssa Ramos, Ellen Rhoads, Brenda Tate, Erin Hoadley, Bill Turner, and Joan Wennerberg.

The Curriculum
The faculty constantly revises both the undergraduate and graduate courses to keep up with theory in the discipline and practices in industry. New graduate courses to be offered in the spring are Ethics in Technical Communication, Hypertext, and Gendered Rhetoric. Undergraduates will also be offered Studies in Hypertext, a new undergraduate course that will be offered for the third time.

The Future-Proposed Ph.D. Program
As for the Ph.D. program, the faculty are currently conducting a needs assessment and drafting a detailed proposal for the program. The proposal should be completed by early December. The proposal will then circulate through various campus committees before it will eventually be presented to the Board of Regents for possible approval. If all proceeds according to plan, the new Ph.D. could be in place by the fall of 2001 or fall 2002. ❖

Employment Opportunities

To update our employment services to our members and provide the most current information, all employment listings and opportunities are now listed on our chapter web site at: **http://stc.org/region3/orl/www/**

VP Peeps
To Summarize...

by Gail Lippincott

Do professional technical communicators channel surf? They did at the August 25th chapter meeting, clicking from biting spiders to FrameMaker to ostriches. The five panelists of "Washlines V" recapped the 46th Annual Conference in Cincinnati with over 20 intriguing graphics representing their observations. With an eye to next year, the panelists advised meeting attendees how to get the most out of the 47th Annual Conference, to be held next May in Orlando at the Swan and Dolphin Hotels.

Newbie conference attendees Nicole Burley and Ruth Eversole recommended taking in all the social events, not only for the great cheese that's always served, but for the interaction with interesting technical communicators from around the world. Political commentator Gwen Thomas elaborated on Knowledge Management, one of the hottest topics at the conference. And veteran attendees (and presenters) Dan Voss and W. C. Wiese kept the audience laughing with their observations, which they've generously shared at *http://www.stc.org/ region3/orl/www/education/46notes/mainmenu.html.*

Upcoming Chapter Meetings

Tuesday, September 28, 1999
Winter Park Civic Center

Jim Druckenmiller from Triton Network Systems will get you started in "Developing an Interactive Document Management System for the Web Using Cold Fusion 4.0." Jim demystifies the key concepts and demonstrates the first steps in creating an interactive web application. Learn how to advise Web-based developers and/or lead an application development project. Once you get started, Jim warns, you are limited only by your imagination and efforts.

Tuesday, October 26, 1999
Winter Park Civic Center

Karen Lane of Karen Lane Editorial Services introduces you to "Web Indexing"—what it is, what it isn't, and how to get started. If you've wondered why you can never find what you're looking for on the Web pages you browse, come learn about Web indexing and how to make your company's site (or your own) a better place to visit. ❖

New Members

The Orlando Chapter welcomes the following new members and appreciates their support:

- ■ Angela M. Sanjurjo
- ■ Jill Seibert
- ■ Nancy A. Wagner

We look forward to seeing you soon at one of our excellent chapter meetings.

Admin Council

by Din Bissoondial

The August Administrative Council meeting primarily dealt with developing a preliminary budget for the 1999-2000 chapter year. The Education Committee presented its proposed goals, objectives and budget, and a discussion was held regarding scholarship and excellence award amounts and procedures. It was noted that 121 information packages were mailed to area schools and school contacts for the chapter's upcoming high school technical writing competition. Dick Hughes will switch roles to assume the managing editor position for *Tech Trends* and Mary McGaughran will be the associate editor. Program announcements and the annual chapter meeting budget was discussed, and W.C. Wiese presented a periodic chapter financial report and summary. ❖

Getting Ready for Orlando 2000

Submitted by Nancy Reach,
Publicity Manager, Conference Support Committee

Orlando will be the host city for STC's 47th Annual Conference, May 21-24, 2000 (hence Orlando 2000). Already the Florida team has achieved many firsts. The team was the first to hold a rally Sunday afternoon at the Cincinnati conference (May 16, 1999) to attract Florida volunteers to serve as "walking booths" to advertise the Orlando 2000 conference. These volunteers earned an Orlando 2000 T-shirt by passing out stickers and memorabilia to conference goers. In all there were 30 volunteers who personally invited Cincinnati attendees to come to Orlando. Marking another first, the Florida team rally also brought together three teams of host chapters allowing the Cincinnati team to share valuable, practical advice with the Florida team (2000) and the Chicago team (2001).

In response to the Conference Advisory Committee's (CAC) redesign of the conference support function, the Florida team is led by the president of the host chapter, who serves as a liaison to the CAC and who has a leaner, more efficient management structure. Florida's Support Committee team leaders include:

> Lori Corbett, Orlando Chapter, host chapter CAC liaison and support manager

> Sue Nurczyk, Suncoast Chapter, deputy support manager

Nancy Reach, Suncoast Chapter, publicity manager

Barbara Odom, Orlando Chapter, corporate support manager

W. C. Wiese, Orlando Chapter, conference treasurer.

To involve other Florida chapters in the important host duties for the conference, members from all the Florida chapters are encouraged to participate. Sue anticipates the need for approximately 60 volunteers at the conference. Typical jobs include handing out flyers, directing foot traffic to events, manning the volunteer room and hospitality booth, unpacking boxes, setting up displays, etc. The Volunteer Committee will begin recruiting positions in January.

Barbara is currently setting up her team so they can hit the ground running early in January. Positions are open for a liaison from each chapter to assist in obtaining donations (funds and/or gifts) from both local and national corporations for student attendance grants for student volunteers, publicity, and hospitality activities at the conference. If interested, please contact Barbara at bcodom@aol.com for details. ❖

Online Documentation Ad

Walt Disney World's Swan and Dolphin Hotels will be the exciting location of STC's 47th Annual Conference next May.

How the Education Committee Spent Summer Vacation

The Education Committee invites you to share our chapter's best-kept secret: the Central Florida High School Technical Writing Competition! Over the summer our eight-member squad, propelled by cheerleader/committee chair Dan Voss, hammered out a decisive plan of action for the 4th Annual Competition. We held cyber meetings and sweatshop sessions at the Orlando Public Library to prepare teacher information packets to coincide with the new school year.

Our efforts culminated in a late July assembly line production with highly trained professionals. We created 120+ information packets to mail to high school English and science department chairpersons of public and private schools in a five-county area. Writing projects in the fall term can then be targeted to meet the competition's December 1st deadline.

In spite of our comprehensive research and audience analysis, however, we overlooked the most important audience–our chapter members and colleagues in Central Florida! We crafted informative, persuasive letters to key teachers, but we neglected to inform the real gatekeepers to high school students: their parents, relatives, and mentors.

Official Invitation

So, you are officially invited to spread the word about our local competition, now in its fourth year. Encourage your own 10th, 11th, and 12th graders to enter their papers. Make copies of this insert to share with your kids or siblings, their friends, and their teachers. Point cyber friends to our Web pages, created by competition chair Jon Kessler and hosted on the chapter's Web site. Read more about the competition and download forms and even a brochure at *http://www.stc.org/region3/orl/ www/education/hscomp.htm.*

We invite high school students in the Central Florida area (Orange, Seminole, Osceola, Brevard, and Volusia counties) to submit entries for the Central Florida High School Technical Writing Competition. There is no entry fee. The chapter sponsors this competition to encourage the development of technical writing skills among students in grades 10, 11, and 12.

What to Submit

To enter the competition, a student must submit an original non-fiction report, essay, or expository article on a technical or scientific subject of his or her choosing. The paper may be written for a course or may be written especially for the competition. Each student may submit only one entry, no longer than five pages (including graphics, endnotes, and references).

The paper should be objective and informative, conveying complete factual information for a specific purpose. It should provide the basis for the reader to understand a concept or process, form an opinion, or reach a decision. The target audience for the paper is an intelligent layperson, not a specialist in the subject area.

Complete format and submission requirements can be found on the Web page: *http://stc.org/region3/orl/ www/education/hscomp.htm*. E-mail any questions about the competition to *jskessler@aol.com*.

Suggested Topics

Each student should write about a topic of personal interest, treated from a technical perspective. Topics such as "Solar Energy," "Physics," or "Biology" are too broad. The five-page limit encourages a focused

Committee Members (l to r) Doug Kerr, Marty Goodwin, Anne Vogt, and Jon Kessler preparing the High School mailing packets.

perspective. Last year's winning titles from the Orlando Chapter were:

- Auroras: Nature's Light Show*
- Food Poisoning: Cause and Prevention
- Fractals: Unifying Structures in the Sciences
- Lung Cancer: A Deadly Threat
- The F-22 Raptor
- The Hubble Space Telescope

*This entry also won an Honorable Mention Award at the International Student Technical Writing Competition.

Judging

A panel of professional writers, editors, and educators will judge the entries. Each entry will be numerically rated using established judging criteria (see following judging criteria).

Judges will consider the overall quality of each entry, including the presence of a clear and coherent thesis; proper organization, including effective use of headings and subheadings; correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation; effective use of graphics; and proper use and documentation of reference materials and sources.

(Students must acknowledge and reference all sources cited in a paper. Reference guidelines can be found under "Entry Requirements" on the Web page.)

Awards

The chapter provides four levels of awards for entries meeting the criteria for each award level:

- Distinguished - $250.00
- Excellence - $150.00
- Merit - $75.00
- Honorable Mention - Certificate

Awards will be presented at the STC Orlando Chapter Awards Dinner in Spring 2000. Winners of the Competition will also receive local recognition of their achievement. Winners and their teachers will be notified by mail before the awards ceremony.

We look forward to many excellent entries!

Competition Postmark Deadline: December 1, 1999.

Central Florida High School
1999 Technical Writing Competition
Entry Form

Student	
Name:	**Address:**
Phone:	**E-Mail:**

School	
School Name:	**Grade:** (Circle one) 10 11 12
Teacher:	

Entry	
Title:	
	Number of Pages:
Purpose of Paper:	
Intended Audience:	

Content Guidelines: Submit an original non-fiction report, essay, or expository article on a technical or scientific subject of your choosing. The paper may be written for a course or especially for this competition. You may submit only one entry. The length of the paper should be five pages or less (including graphics, endnotes, and references).

Format Requirements: Entries must be typed in English, 1½ or double-spaced on one side of non-erasable white 8½- by 11-inch paper. Computer printouts are acceptable if produced on a laser or inkjet printer.

Entry Fee: None.

Submission Information: Entries must be postmarked by December 1, 1999.

Submit two copies of your paper. Staple a completed entry form to each copy at the top left corner. Do not use covers or binders. Mail your entry flat in a 9- by 12-inch envelope via first-class mail to:

Central Florida High School
Technical Writing Contest
P.O. Box 1343
Orlando, FL 32802-1343

Any questions regarding the competition or its guidelines should be submitted via e-mail to *jskessler@aol.com.*

Central Florida High School
1999 Technical Writing Competition
Judging Criteria

1. **Subject and Purpose** (Score: 0-10). The writer provides a paper on an appropriate technical, science, or scientific subject and clearly states the main idea of the paper.

2. **Audience** (Score: 0-10). The writer identifies and describes the audience (on the entry form), and effectively makes the content interesting and helpful to readers in the target audience.

3. **Scope** (Score: 0-10). The writer provides a depth of detail appropriate for the purpose of the paper.

4. **Organization** (Score: 0-10). The writer effectively arranges the main supporting ideas as well as the supportive detail under each main idea.

5. **Content** (Score: 0-10). The writer provides appropriate examples, details, descriptions, definitions, comparisons, analogies, etc.

6. **Style and Tone** (Score: 0-10). The writer conveys a strong sense of his or her own habitual language choices. Word choice, sentence length and variety, paragraph length, etc., and the writer's attitude toward the subject and audience are appropriate.

7. **Grammar** (Score: 0-10). The writer avoids serious errors in grammar (for example, subject-verb agreement, comma splices, run-on sentences, pronoun case).

8. **Mechanics** (Score: 0-10). The writer avoids errors in mechanics (punctuation, spelling, abbreviations, numbers, capitalization).

9. **Design and Illustration** (Score: 0-10). The writer provides good margins, clear headings, effective typefaces or fonts, appropriate lists or other reader aids throughout the paper. If appropriate to the purpose of the paper, illustrations (for example, graphs, charts, photographs, tables) are provided and are effectively displayed.

10. **Sources** (Score: 0-10). The writer uses sources effectively and acknowledges any direct quotations or paraphrased material in a references, bibliography or works-cited page.

For a Good Laugh

Information Needed for Chapter Newsletter
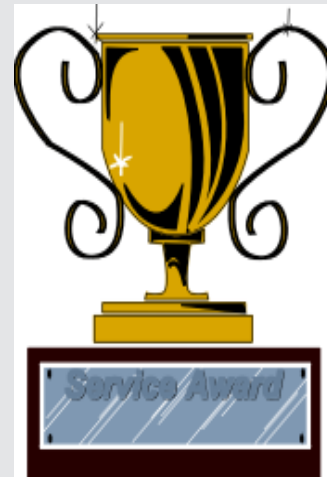
Since the Orlando Chapter will be a key host for the 47th Annual Conference next May, we thought it fitting to brag a little bit about our members' achievements.

If any Orlando Chapter members have published articles and/or given presentations in STC or non-STC publications and meetings, or have received other professional recognitions or awards, please let us know. We'll brag about you in future issues of *Tech Trends*. Send me an e-mail and let me know of your accomplishments!

Xerographics Ad

Regional News

Welcome to PCOC 23!

The Practical Conference on Communication, PCOC (pronounced peacock), sponsored by the East Tennessee Chapter, is the longest running multiple-day regional conference in STC. The conference gathers professionals from throughout the United States who share their communications experience and practical knowledge. This year's conference will be held on October 15 and 16, in Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

Judy Glick-Smith, STC Second Vice President and President/CEO of Integrated Documentation, Inc. will be the keynote this year. Her speech will address knowledge management and its importance to technical communicators.   PCOC will offer three focused seminars:

- Writing for Results, by Rich Maggiani
- Preparing for XML: Six Steps to Determine the Readiness of Your Enterprise Information, by Lisa Pappas and Karie Cook
- Design Issues in a Digital World, by Steve Gordon

Additionally, the workshop, Assessing the Quality of Technical Publications, by Jeffrey Hibbard, is free and open to all.

The conference will also feature two "Technical Topics" sessions where presenters will give the highlights of their papers, which will be published in the conference proceedings. Topics for papers are still being considered. The deadline for submission of approved papers is **September 30, 1999**. To propose a paper, or for further information, contact Bonnie Nestor at *nestormb@ornl.gov,* or visit the conference website at *http://www.stc.org/region3/etc/Pages/pcoc23.htm.*

Conference Extras

The East Tennessee Chapter will host a reception for early check-in and registration on Thursday night (October 14) from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Jameson Inn in Oak Ridge. Pick up registration packets, enjoy refreshments, meet new friends, network, and visit with colleagues.

Autumn is one of the best seasons in East Tennessee. Fall colors and beautiful weather make it hard not to think about getting outside! To that end, we have two exceptional offerings during the conference.

Friday evening's dinner will be served on the Secret City Scenic Excursion Train, a vintage train that goes from the site of the former DOE Gaseous Diffusion Plant through Wheat Community (the birthplace of Sam Rayburn) to Blair Community in the foothills of the Cumberland Mountains and back again.

If you want a little more exercise, bring your boots or walking shoes for a Saturday afternoon hike. One of the fringe benefits of living between the Smoky Mountains and the Cumberland Plateau is that there is always somewhere interesting to explore. All are welcome, the destination will be tailored to the experience level of the participants. ❖

Eye on Language

by Mary Kendig

Demystifying Diversity

If your workplace is anything like my workplace, you've already received more than your rightful share of literature about diversity. This literature, attractively packaged and written in that lofty-sounding language of noun strings and adverbs, communicates the corporate stand on diversity and talks about the strides that the company has made to practice diversity in its corporate culture. The intentions are honorable, don't get me wrong. I just wish the folks responsible for communicating this stuff would put it in terms that real people can relate to and identify with. Diversity, after all, shouldn't come off sounding like the year's latest buzzword or trend but as something that is felt and practiced in earnest throughout an entire lifetime.

In preparing for my workgroup's get-together to talk about what diversity means to us individually, I began to think about coming up with a simple analogy that would help me cut through the jargon and honestly relate my feelings about the subject. The words *simple* and *honest* stuck with me. Being the child of 1960's television that I am, I found myself thinking (oddly enough) about how Andy Taylor and those Mayberry folks would describe diversity. That's when I came upon a realization: Being diverse, to me, has a lot in common with being neighborly, just in a broad or global sense. Here's my perspective on it.

- **Recognize all people's equal right to live in the community, provided they follow the rules.**
  Be objective and fair. Be tolerant. Be understanding and flexible. Value others; help them succeed.

- **Get to know the people in your global community.**
  Be a good "neighbor." Communicate frequently and openly. Become involved. Care.

- **Bring a cake to the community bake sale.**
  Be creative. Dig in. Give of your time and talents; share them freely and willingly.

- **Buy a cake from the bake sale.**
  Be supportive. Participate. Believe in teamwork. Understand that working together and helping one another is the way to succeed.

- **Keep your house presentable and your lawn mowed.**
  Act responsibly. Fulfill your responsibilities. Be accountable. Pull your weight. Be in control of your environment.

- **Don't have an unhealthy preoccupation with keeping up with the Joneses.**
  Don't get caught up in competition. Don't be suspicious. Don't be petty.

As simplistic as these thoughts are, I think they might be better understood than the convoluted statements in those much-too-lengthy corporate diversity brochures. In a very real sense, our coworkers and customers *are* our neighbors. We might even see them or speak with them more often than we do our actual neighbors. And, at the risk of sounding like Mr. Rogers, our workplace *is* our neighborhood. Maybe you agree; maybe you don't. (Isn't that diversity in action?) But at the very least, I hope these thoughts inspire you to honestly consider your own feelings on the subject.

As for me, I can almost hear ol' Andy saying it now: "Well, I reckon it just all boils down to bein' mindful and respectful of our neighbor-folks, no matter what neighborhood we're in—ain't that right, Opie?"❖

Coming Up...

September 28 Chapter Meeting: Developing an Interactive Document Management System for the Web using Cold Fusion 4.0. Presenter - Jim Druckenmiller, Triton Network Systems, Inc.

Winter Park Civic Center
1050 W. Morse Blvd.
Winter Park, Florida

Members: $5.00 / Nonmembers: $7.00
6:30 p.m.: Sign-in and Networking
7:00 p.m.: Program
RSVP to Lori Corbett at stcmember@aol.com or (407) 903-2042.

October 15-16 23rd Annual Practical Conference on Communication (PCOC)

Oak Ridge, Tennessee

October 26 Chapter Meeting: Web Indexing. Presenter - Karen Lane, Karen Lane Editorial Services.

Winter Park Civic Center
1050 W. Morse Blvd.
Winter Park, Florida

Members: $5.00 / Nonmembers: $7.00
6:30 p.m.: Sign-in and Networking
7:00 p.m.: Program
RSVP to Lori Corbett at stcmember@aol.com or (407) 903-2042.

November 3   Submission Deadline for the November/December issue of *Tech Trends*

December 8 Chapter Meeting: (Watch for details in our next issue)

May 21-24, 2000 - STC Annual Conference

Orlando, Florida

TECH TRENDS

Orlando Chapter
P.O. Box 1343
Orlando, FL 32802-1343
http://stc.org/region3/orl/www/

—PLEASE FORWARD—

society for technical communication