Memo to Members

We're Ready to Present the First Annual Jaffe Awards
by W.C. Wiese

Inside this issue:

Get Published in the STC Newsletter!

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please contact **Christina Payne** at christina.l.payne@lmco.com.

We've come a long way since last summer when the Administrative Council approved a contest to identify the top technical communicator in Central Florida and the company that was insightful enough to employ him or her. The applications came in almost three months ago. The judges defined the criteria two months ago and agonized about the process and refined it through the holiday period.

But we won't have to wait much longer. *Are you the technical communicator who will win the first annual Gloria Jaffe Outstanding Technical Communicator Award?*

The presentation will be held at the Winter Park Civic Center (near Morse Boulevard and Highway 17-92) on Tuesday, January 28. A light meal will be provided starting at 6:30 p.m. Casual business

> **"The evening also marks our second annual joint meeting with UCF."**
>
> **—W.C. Wiese**

attire is recommended for chapter members.

We have chosen to present the award at a joint meeting between the Orlando Chapter and faculty members and students of the University of Central Florida (UCF) Department of English.

Professor Gloria Jaffe will be at our January meeting to present the awards.

Professor Jaffe, who is now retired, contributed vigorously to both organizations during her career, and we are pleased to honor her by presenting the Jaffe Award in the presence of both communities. Her leadership is reflected in the enduring communication values prized by the Orlando Chapter and in the professionalism of UCF graduates that is a cherished tradition of the technical communications program.

We are especially pleased that Professor Jaffe will be able to

attend and present these inaugural awards in person.

The evening also marks our second annual joint meeting with UCF, for which the technical communications faculty selects a speaker of significant benefit to their curriculum and the Orlando Chapter provides funding. The faculty has selected Mr. Paul Bertram, president and CEO of PRB Design, a firm that develops communications programs for building products manufacturers. His presentation – *Visually Driving Technical Information* – will cover the basics of information architecture and strategies for explaining graphic design support.

The Chapter is grateful for the time and effort of the Jaffe Award Judging Committee. **Alicia Fellure**, Lead Judge, is a Distinguished Chapter Service Award winner (Jacksonville) and currently serves the Society as manager for the International Online Technical Communication Competition. She is joined by four current or former chapter officers.

- **Bruce Cone** is a senior

Jaffe Awards, cont'd

member of the Society and served as Orlando Chapter president in the early 1990s. He was one of the driving forces behind the successful proposal to locate the STC annual conference in Orlando in 2000.

- **Bill Paskert** is a senior member of the Society, served as Orlando Chapter president in the mid-1990s, and continued as Bylaws Chairman for several additional years.

- **Richard Phipps**, a professional recruiter with CIBER, is the Orlando Chapter's employment manager and contributes a

unique ability to assess job demands in the modern workplace.

- **Barbara Odom**, the chapter's Membership and Hospitality chairperson, is a senior member, independent contractor, and frequent presenter to the chapter.

Without their commitment and dedication, there would be no Jaffe Award presentation.

Calling All Leaders: Run For Office!
by Janette Farnsworth

Dear STC Orlando members,

Would you like to:

- Help shape the future of the Orlando Chapter?
- Have fun and meet new people?
- Increase your visibility within the organization?
- Provide an invaluable service to your peers?
- Enjoy enhanced personal and professional growth?

If you answered yes to even one of these

questions, you should consider running for an elected chapter office for the 2003-2004 year. All current members with dues paid for the 2003 year are eligible to run for office. Nominations are sought for:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

Please contact any of the following Nominating Committee members with nominations for yourself or others by February 25, 2003:

- Janette Farnsworth: janette@scribetree.com (407-677-8300)
- Joanne Godwin: joanneg@cfl.rr.com (407-243-9095)
- Chris Laning: chrislaning@cfl.rr.com (407-359-9377)

A short biographical summary will be requested for each candidate who accepts a nomination.

Please contact Janette Farnsworth at janette@scribetree.com for more information.

Judging Opportunity at Science and Engineering Fair
by Mike Murray
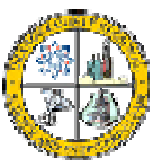
Judging for the 2002/2003 Orange County Regional Science and Engineering Fair will take place on February 19, 2003, at the Central Florida Fairgrounds.

Judging represents an excellent op-

portunity for technical communicators to develop both professionally and personally, as well as providing an important community service.

Please consider joining me on February 19 for this year's competition.

For more information and to register as a judge, please visit:

www.bobsmedley.net/ocrsef/index.htm or contact Mike Murray at mike.murray@lmco.com.

Taking the 'Dis' out of 'Disabilities': Special Needs SIG Seeks Support
by Dan Voss

Just a reminder as the STC membership renewal process creeps up on its February 28 deadline...

The Society's newest SIG, the Special Needs SIG, is still looking for new members to support them in its twin mission to assist technical communicators with disabilities in the practice of our profession and to provide all technical communicators with information that will help them make our communication products more accessible to users with disabilities. A detailed mission statement is available at the Web site.

The SNSIG has already made significant progress: a comprehensive Web site (see www.stcsig.org/sn/index. shtml); an online newsletter (first edition is posted at www.stcsig.org/sn/newsletter.shtml); and extensive support to the 49th STC Conference, including publication of *Guidelines for Persons with Special Needs* and an *Ad-*

dendum thereto, a successful progression, and several articles in the *Proceedings* (conference materials available at www.stc-orlando.org/prodev/49notes/SNC.asp).

But there is much yet to do, and to accomplish it, the SNSIG needs more people. It is looking both for Active members, to join its initiatives; and Patrons, whose affiliation will help the SIG secure the budget it needs to fulfill its objectives.

If you wish to support the Special Needs SIG, you have two options: (1) If you have not yet submitted your STC membership renewal, simply check the SNSIG box when you do. (2) If you have already submitted your STC membership renewal, download the SIG sign-up form from www.stc.org/PDF_Files/sigform.pdf and submit it directly to the Society Office. In either case, in order to be added to the SNSIG's newsletter and/or listserv without delay, contact daniel.w.voss@lmco.com or jvinegar@myranch.com.

Usability Workshop Presented by the Suncoast Chapter
by Martha Collins

On February 15, the Suncoast STC Chapter will present a four-hour usability workshop that introduces the basic and practical aspects of usability . From building usability into a design to ensuring it through development and testing, technical communicators can make a valuable and significant contribution to the product-development life cycle. This workshop will give you the tools and concepts to promote and participate in user-centered design practices with your clients or in your company.

The goals of the workshop are to:

- Have participants walk away with a clear definition of usability engineering and common usability activities
- Introduce the basic methodologies for usability testing using a talk-out-loud protocol.
- Identify the transferable skills and paths for pursuing user-centered design practices.

- Encourage participants to identify practical means of promoting usability in their business environment.

The Workshop will be held Saturday, February 15, 2003, in room 134 of the John H. Sykes College of Business, located on the University of Tampa campus. The workshop will begin at 9:00 a.m. For directions and a map of the campus, go to www.ut.edu/aboutUT/map.html .

The cost for the workshop is $30 for STC members and $40 for nonmembers and includes light refreshments. To register for the Workshop, go to www.stc-southeast.org/suncoast/events.htm.

The Workshop will be led by current STC President **Ed See** and **Susan Jensen**, assistant to the STC President for Leadership. Ed See is a managing director at BearingPoint (formerly KPMG Consulting, Inc). With a strong background in software product development, enterprise application integration, internet marketing, and user-

centered design, he is able to drive software development and organization to create products and systems that are rich in function and at the same time simple to use. Ed's ability to make technology a competitive edge and to drive organizations to high efficiency and high performance has created value for his clients.

Susan Jensen is principal owner of Effective Design, working with clients to develop usable software applications. She speaks from experience gained over 20 years in technical fields and through a variety of design projects that blend electronic and paper media, high and low tech, and the needs of skilled and unskilled users.

In addition to their senior officer roles in STC, Ed and Susan are both members of the Usability SIG, which with more than 2,000 members, is one of STC's largest.

Please contact Martha Collins at mcollin8@tampabay.rr.com for more information.

UCF Students: the Orlando STC Chapter Wants YOU!
By Dan Voss

In an effort to revitalize a longstanding partnership between the Orlando Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication and the technical communication program at the University of Central Florida, the chapter's Administrative Council has just approved a substantial discount in STC student memberships, valid through the end of this month (January 2003).

The chapter will provide a one-time subsidy of $15, thereby reducing the $50 cost of a student membership—itself a whopping 64% reduction off the $140 regular membership fee—to $35, and it will also provide new registrants with three $5 coupons for admission to chapter meetings (valid through December 2003). Chapter meetings are typically priced at $5 for students (except for an occasional dinner meeting which may be a few dollars more). Thus the total cost of membership is effectively reduced by more than half.

Student memberships bring the full benefits of STC affiliation: quarterly issues of the internationally recognized and data-rich journal, *Technical Communication*; bimonthly issues of the lively newsmagazine, *Intercom*; access to a comprehensive Web site, including member-restricted databases on job listings, salary surveys, extensive archives of Society publications (especially *TC*) that are an absolute godsend to research projects in technical communication; and other valuable resources. Perhaps most important of all, STC membership provides students with the opportunity to network with practitioners of our profession, benefiting from their experience, contacts, and guidance.

The special offer will be valid through January 31. In the interest of fairness, UCF students who have joined STC since August 2002, paying the full $50 fee, will receive six $5 coupons for admission to future chapter meetings. Coupons are valid beginning with the February chapter meeting and expire January 1, 2004.

The decision was made to coincide with the presentation of the inaugural Gloria Jaffe Outstanding Technical Communicator Award at the January 28 meeting.

The Orlando Chapter encourages students to attend next Tuesday's meeting in order to benefit from the outstanding speaker Paul Bertram, to be present for the inaugural presentation of the Jaffe Awards, and to take advantage of the discounted STC membership rate and $5 meeting coupons by signing up at the meeting. Students who have a conflict on the 28th can still receive the reduced rate and the meeting coupons by contacting membership manager Barbara Odom (BCOdom@aol.com) no later than January 31. The chapter is also planning a delicious light supper for the festive occasion. Such a deal!

Come one, come all. This is a landmark evening not to be missed.

We Aren't Just Our Job Titles, Not by a Long Shot
By John Hedtke

Somewhere between drafting the "Production Information" and "Staffing" sections of a recent book proposal, I was struck by how many different things we do as communicators. We are not just our job titles We're more than *just* writers, or *just* editors, or *just* artists; we have an enormous number of skills we use every day that we probably don't think much about but that are essential to our ability to get our jobs done.

First and foremost, we write, or we edit, or we draw, or we paint, or we create online materials. This is our primary skill set as communicators, and it's a big one, but it's not our only one.

We also have to be skilled interviewers, eliciting information from source matter experts about a project. As part of this process, we usually have to dig deep into the understanding of our audience and what they need and want, which moves us into the realm of marketing.

We are continually having to train people: the people who work for us, our peers in our departments, the people in other departments we need to get to provide us with information in a predictable format and on a regular schedule, and even our vendors so they'll give us exactly what we're after. You can add "teaching" to that list of job skills.

Furthermore, as most of us have discovered, our jobs are usually horizontal rather than vertical: what we do often cuts across the departments for an entire company or division rather than focusing on one piece of it. As a result, we often have to be effective salespeople, able to pitch ideas and concepts quickly and effectively to managers and peers in other departments. And finally, underscoring all of this, we have to be effective project managers, even if it's only for the management of our own time and tasks.

You can probably think of another half dozen skills that I haven't mentioned, most of which you probably had to use today at work. The bottom line in telling you this is to point out that, as technical communicators, we have to maintain expertise in many different fields and wear a lot of different hats every day to do our jobs. We have a wide range of skills of interests. We are extraordinary people. But, shucks, you probably knew all that already.

This article was reprinted from Interface with permission from John Hedtke, president of the STC Hoosier Chapter.

Tool Tips: Calling Agent Ransack
by David Coverston

There was a bumper sticker a few years ago that read something like "I finally got it all together, but I forgot where I put it!" When you are looking for a particular piece of information on your computer, you might be reminded of that bumper sticker.

Windows offers a search utility that you can access from the Start >Find menu or by using the Windows Key +F shortcut. You can even search for your target text in files using the advanced search. But if you want something a little more robust, then you will want to check out Agent Ransack.

Like the Windows Find application, Agent Ransack lets you search for files by name and modification date, and lets you save your search results to a file. But Agent Ransack adds the ability of letting you search through multiple folders in a single search. You can search a local network at the same time you are searching your hard drive or multiple hard drives.

A powerful feature of this program is the ability to use regular expressions. Regular expressions are used in the programming community as a standard way of searching for text strings. For example, you can match the beginning of a string, the end of a string, or lists of characters in a string.

Are you a little unsure about using regular expressions? Well, Agent Ransack has a Help file that gives a good overview of using regular expressions. And if you want to jump right in, click an Expression wizard button for an easy walk-through of searching for a file name or text in a file. You will find a point-and-click interface that builds the expression for you.

I have used Agent Ransack to search compiled help (.chm) files, .html & .mht files, Excel, Word ,and FrameMaker files. It does not search PDF files, however. It is supposed to, but it does not always display the text you were looking for in the contents view window. Nevertheless, when you are looking for a file, or when you are looking for certain terms in files, Agent Ransack can be a invaluable tool.

Agent Ransack is freeware and can be downloaded from www.agentransack.com.

David Coverston, Orlando Chapter secretary, is a technical-writer for PaySys International, Inc. If you have any questions about this Tool Tips article, please feel free to contact David at dcoverston@paysys.com.

Introducing the Orlando Word Mint: Coining New Words for Every Occasion
by Karen Lane and Dan Voss

This month's coinage:

Dezombification (n.). Returning someone to a state of consciousness following a moribund or semi-comatose period. From *zombification* (n.), the process of driving someone into a zombie-like state; etymology tracks to *zombie* (n, colloquial.), referring to a walking corpse, as in the "living dead." See also *zombify* (v.t.), to cause someone to fall into a zombie-like state, and *dezombify* (v.t.), to return someone to consciousness from a

zombie-like state. Example 1, professional arena: "Multiple doses of industrial-strength coffee were necessary to achieve thorough dezombification of the writing staff after back-to-back all-nighters to produce the final documentation." Example 2, personal arena: "Marsha told Harry that unless he entered a dezombification program for sports couch potatoes, she was cutting him off from Monday Night Football." Examples of other words in the verbal suite: "I hate when Harry drinks. Two

beers zombify him completely." "These staff meetings contribute to nothing except the complete and utter zombification of all who attend them."

Designing the Future of Technical Communication in Central Florida
by Mike Murray, Chapter President

What you see it the headline is the mission statement for the Orlando Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication. Wow, are you sure? Little ole us? Should we address something a little less daunting perhaps – like global warming or the worldwide economic condition? Relax, it's not as overwhelming as it seems. In fact, we've already begun!

Values

The first step for the chapter's Administrative Council in establishing a plan of attack involved some inward thinking to identify our values. These values direct us in all of our decisions and in everything we do:

- We uphold the Society's code of ethics that guides our professional behavior, including legality, honesty, confidentiality, quality, fairness, and professionalism, both individually and as a chapter.

- As technical communicators, we add value to communication and encourage it in others. This defines our profession and charts our course.

- As professionals who add value to information, we are entitled to both respect and equitable compensation.

Vision

Now that the Council had established our values, we could use them as a foundation for visualizing what we see for the Central Florida community in 5-10 years. Now was our chance to dream – and dream we did! Here's what we saw:

- An elevation of the standing of technical and professional communication such that it is respected in other professions and throughout the community

- Greater recognition of the technical communication profession in Central Florida

- Greater value placed on our members in their workplace, their contributions solicited in every communication context, and their advice sought and heeded at every level and in every industry we serve

- A very active and fully involved educational outreach program in secondary schools and colleges in our community, as well as a leadership role in the Society-level educational outreach initiative

- Expanded membership and increased activity among members

- Recognition from the Society for our contributions to help pursue its strategic goals and objectives

- A continuation of our "club-house" atmosphere that makes chapter meetings a place where people want to be

Strategic Plan

Putting together a strategic plan to guide the Orlando Chapter in meeting its vision of the future while honoring its values was the final step in the process. As we are striving over the next few years to attain and maintain the high-level distinctions of Chapter of Excellence and Chapter of Distinction, those requirements merged with our vision of the future to create the Orlando Chapter Strategic Plan. The Plan will be finalized at the next Administrative Council meeting and posted on the chapter Web site for all to see and support.

Jaffe Award and Beyond

Remember bullets two and three of our vision?

- Greater recognition of the technical communication profession in Central Florida

- Greater value placed on our members in their workplace…

The Gloria Jaffe Outstanding Technical Communicator Award, which is the focal point of our January meeting, directly supports these two objectives. Think about the other objectives for a minute, and you'll be able to identify other activities that are moving us steadfastly toward the attainment of our chapter's vision – Designing the future of technical communications in Central Florida!

Pretty incredible, huh? And you are in the right place at the right time to see it all happen!

STC Telephone Seminars

Do you think your executive summaries could be tighter? Cleaner? Provide a more polished view of your services to your clients?

If so, please attend the next STC Telephone Seminar: *Creating Persuasive Executive Summaries* with Stacia D. Kelly on February 5, 2002, 1-2:30 PM Eastern Standard Time.

What Is a Telephone Seminar?

A telephone seminar is much like a large conference call where the speaker makes his or her presentation over the phone.

Cost

With a telephone seminar, the cost is per site, not per person.

- U.S. sites: $145.00 USD
- Canadian sites: $160.00 USD
- Overseas sites: Please contact the STC office

Sign-up today!

www.stc.org/seminars.asp

December Meeting: Printing
by David Coverston

Last month, Linda Sang and Laura Hoehl of Minuteman Press in Winter Park gave STC members an informative presentation to assist with the printing process.

Do you know what your printing options are when you want to have something printed?

Linda said that printers offer three options. They are:

1. **Full color**: This is a four-color process in which four negatives are made for the printing press, one each for cyan, magenta, yellow and black (CMYK). This is the most expensive and highest quality option, most appropriate for large press runs (500+ copies).

2. **Spot colors**: This process is used for documents that need one to three additional colors and is used mainly for letterhead, envelopes, business cards, and forms. To get accurate colors, you should use the Pantone Matching System. Pantone is a worldwide standard for printing colors accurately.

3. **Digital**: This is an electronic file to paper process and is economical for short runs of 300-400 copies. Digital copies have all the colors that full color copies have. But with digital printing, the costs are the same for each unit, whereas with full color printing, the cost per copy drops as the number of total copies increases.

For the best results with your artwork, you should use a professional graphics program to create your art. Suggested programs are Corel Draw, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, Quark, and Page-Maker. Sending PDF files is also acceptable.

Microsoft Publisher is a last resort because items in Publisher sometimes shift, giving unexpected results. Forget Adobe In-Design. Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Printshop are not good choices to use either. Don't do as one customer did and sent in a fax to be printed. Yes, they really did.

Keep in mind that printers cannot use the Red Green Blue (RGB) colors that computer monitors use to display your artwork. Professional programs can convert the monitor's display colors to the CMYK colors that printers use.

Another tip Linda gave us is for the best results for your print job, was to send a copy of the fonts you use along with your copy. Generally Mac-to-PC font conversions work well, but there are exceptions. Sometimes the printer may not have your font at all or it may be named differently. Also, send a copy of your artwork in separate files.

Minuteman Press was at our December meeting to give us some successful printing tips!

Timelines are critical for many printing jobs, and Linda offered some tips in this area:

- Plan in advance who will do any artwork you need. Who will do the work for you?
- Allow extra time in case the files need additional work.
- Remember that for complex jobs, film negatives must be produced, which takes time.
- Allow for time needed to send your print job to a bindery.

- If you have custom items such as embossing or foiling, they will take extra time.

Services you should expect from a printer are:

- Fairness and honesty.
- Competitive pricing. Get quotes from different companies. Just because a company is a franchise does not mean it will cost more.
- Face-to-face meetings for major projects.
- Help in choosing paper textures and ink colors. Look at the work samples of the printing company.
- The return of artwork and films. If the printer was paid to create them for you, they belong to you. Don't be afraid to ask for them.

Finally, build a relationship with your printer. They will help you when you need a job quickly since they are familiar with your printing needs. You will feel more at ease if you have to call them about the white powder in your box. It's baby powder used to dry certain inks. Yes, this happened also.

For more information, look at the Printing Association of Florida's Web site at www.pafgraf.org.

January Meeting: Visually Driving Technical Information
Presented by Paul Bertram

On Tuesday, January 28, Paul Bertram, president and CEO of PRB Design in Orlando will present *Visually Driving Technical Information* to our chapter and technical communications faculty members from UCF. PRB Design, established by Mr. Bertam in 1978, is a firm that develops communications programs for manufacturers of building products.

The presentation will cover basics of information architecture and strategies for explaining graphic design support. Mr. Bertram will review case studies including Web site design, public awareness programs, training support, and several unique information transition tools.

The University of Central Florida Technical Writing Faculty specifically chose Mr. Bertram to speak at this joint meeting, and after learning more about him, you will clearly understand why.

Mr. Bertram is an information architect and explanation graphic designer specializing in developing communication programs for building product manufacturers. He is a member of The Greater Orlando Chapter of CSI (Construction Specifications Institute). Serving as an editorial advisor to the *Construction Specifier Magazine*, Mr. Bertram is also featured monthly on CSI's Institute Web site at www.csinet.org.

Mr. Bertram will feel right at home amongst us writers because he has been published in over 70 industry articles for publications such as *Walls & Ceilings*, *The Construction Specifier*, *Roofing Consultants Institute*, *Today's Facility Manager* and *Construction Canada*, to name a few. He has also made numerous industry presentations on topics that include Internet trends and green building products.

Paul Bertram, president and CEO of PRB Design will speak at January's STC meeting.

All STC monthly meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. at the Winter Park Civic Center unless otherwise specified.

February 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12 Administrative Council Meeting	13	14	15 Suncoast Chapter Usability Workshop
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 STC Monthly Meeting	26	27	28	

Chapter Meeting Schedule

- **January 28-** Joint Meeting with UCF
- **February 25-** Writing Contest and Awards Banquet
- **March 25–** *The Tina-Xena Transformation: A Recipe for Professional Empowerment*
- **April 22-** *Employment Progression* and Scholarship Awards
- **May 27-** Panel Discussion on *Help*
- **June 24-** Year-end Banquet

Choose Your Own Caption
by Christina Payne

As Newsletter Editor, I get to have some say into what goes into our monthly publication. For the picture on the right from December's holiday chapter meeting, there were just too many appropriate suggestions for captions so I decided to publish them all! Enjoy!

"No really, Bob, you get used to it after it's been on awhile."

Santa congratulates Bob Elf, winner of the coveted *Naughty or Nice* award.

Our dedicated and professional staff will be delighted to serve you...

"Geez, Bob, I'm sure glad that they spiked that egg-nog..."

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