



Memo to Members

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If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please contact **Erika Coto** at ecoto72@yahoo.com.

Promising Future Technical Communicators

Local High School Students Win Awards in Annual STC Technical Writing Competition

by Jon Kessler

Orlando, in a near clean sweep, dominated this year's STC student technical writing competition. Four out of five awards went to Central Florida high school students, from a nationwide field.

Since 1996, the Orlando Chapter has conducted a local technical writing competition for Central Florida high school students. After the local contest is over, the top entries are forwarded to the STC International Student Technical Writing Competition, in which all society chapters are invited to participate.

Eric First, Andrew Lai, and Alexia Ash of Winter Springs High School, and Bonnie Li of Lake Brantley High School, were honored by the STC for outstanding

achievement. One of the missions of the Society is the commitment to encourage early development of technical communication skills. It is



Competition winners (left to right): Eric First, Andrew Lai, and Alexia Ash of Winter Springs School

hoped that the local and international competition will hone students' writing skills, establish links to the education community, and contribute to future college and career choices.

First's essay, *Augmented Reality: A Vision of the Future*, took second place (Excellence, a \$500 award) in the international contest, and Lai's

Miscommunication: The Role of Cell Cycle Regulators in the Development of Cancer, finished third (Merit, a \$300 award). Ash and Li brought home Honorable Mentions for *The Evolution of Computer Control* and *The Science Behind Photography*, respectively.

Over a seven-year period, Central Florida students have earned 82 awards and \$5,125 in cash prizes from the Orlando Chapter and the STC. A complete listing of the award winners, including the titles of their essays, is available at <http://www.stc-orlando.org/education/highsch/allhsawards.asp>.

2003 Pellegrin Scholarship Recipients**Three UCF Tech Writing Students Receive STC Pellegrin Scholarships***by STC Fellows Dr. Dan Jones and Dan Voss*

Bonnie Spivey received an undergraduate scholarship award and Cindy Hauptner and Bob Stultz both received graduate scholarship awards from the Society for Technical Communication (STC) for excellence in technical communication.

The scholarships, from the Melissa Pellegrin Memorial Scholarship Fund, were presented to the UCF students at a meeting of the sponsoring STC Orlando Chapter at the Winter Park Civic Center on April 22.

The scholarship fund honors the memory of a 1994 UCF graduate and Orlando STC chapter member. A plaque bearing the scholarship recipients' names is on permanent display in the UCF English Department. This year's undergraduate award was \$500; the graduate awards were each \$350.



Bonnie Spivey is a senior in the technical writing program at UCF. She is a student member of the Orlando chapter of STC as well as a member

of the chapter's Education Committee and special needs SIG. Bonnie is also president of UCF's technical writing club, Future Technical Communicators, a student-run organization that hosts and teaches regularly scheduled Saturday tool skills workshops and promotes student attendance at local STC meetings. After she graduates next spring, Bonnie plans on working at a summer internship and then returning to UCF to earn her Master's degree.

Bonnie says, "I see the Pellegrin award as representative of quality and excellence in technical writing, and I

am honored to have received it. As many UCF students know, Melissa embodied every positive characteristic a technical writer could aspire to have. In her honor, I will strive to carry on the legacy of excellence that distinguishes her."

Bonnie plans to use the scholarship

money to help pay for her summer tuition. As for her career plans, she says: "I plan on writing for either the medical

or aerospace industries. Also, I may pursue a technical editing position for a magazine like *Science* or *Nature*. Honestly, there are so many wonderful options in the field of technical writing that I find it extremely difficult to choose."



Cindy Hauptner is currently finishing a Master of Arts degree in the University of Central Florida's technical writing program. Recently, she has taught courses in composition and technical writing at UCF. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology, also from UCF.

For Cindy, "the Pellegrin award represents student achievement in technical communication." She says, "I believe that the past winners of the Pellegrin award have excelled not only

in their study of technical communication, but also in preparing themselves for a career in technical communication by working with professionals outside the

university environment." She plans to use the scholarship money to help pay her expenses for graduate school.

Concerning her future plans, Cindy says: "I am interested in pursuing many different avenues within technical communication. I find that I can indulge my interests in scientific subjects through technical communication, so I would like to pursue technical communication in an environment where I can learn about a scientific subject."

Bob Stultz has been enrolled in the



M.A. program in technical writing at UCF since January 2001. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree in English (Literature) from UCF. He's originally from Fort Lauderdale and moved to Orlando in 1996 to attend UCF.

For Bob, "the Pellegrin scholarship stands for a job well done in a challenging academic program and in a challenging profession. Only a couple students receive the scholarship each year, so the selection process is quite selective. The Pellegrin scholarship has come to symbolize excellence." Like Bonnie and Cindy, Bob plans to use his

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Scholarships, cont'd

(Continued from page 2)

scholarship funds to help with the expenses of tuition and books.

Bob says he's considering two areas within technical communication: "The first area I am considering is software documentation. I

"The Pellegrin scholarship stands for a job well done in a challenging academic program and in a challenging profession."

am specifically interested in online documentation. The second area I am considering is education. As a graduate student at UCF, I have had the opportunity to teach an introductory technical communication course, as well as first-year composition courses. I have found this to be a very rewarding experience. In the future, hopefully I can combine these two areas of interest."

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Sizing Up the Situation

My Most Dangerous Mission Ever!

by Bob Shydo

(President's Note: When asked to find the shirt size of his business partner and Orlando Chapter Active Member Cathi Balboa, Vice President Bob Shydo responded with the following bit of very creative writing that had the Administrative Council members rolling on the floor with laughter! With Bob's permission, his e-mail is republished here. Note that actual shirt sizes have not been included in order to protect the innocent – oh, and Bob too!)

First of all if the same rules apply to business partners as wives the answer is "petite," no matter what size she wears. *I learned that one a long time ago!* If that's the case, then I would have to assume that, like my wife's, Cathi's shirts are mysteriously missing any and all labels that identify size.

Whoa, the last time I was assigned hazardous duty, I received hazardous duty pay. But then again, in those days I was invincible, crazy and broke. What's my incentive for this assignment? I realize I'm no longer invincible, but I am still crazy. Well, two out of three isn't too bad.

I put on my jungle fatigues, camouflaged my face, attached a bunch of palm fronds to my clothes and helmet, and grabbed my rusty, I mean trusty, M16 and two full magazines. You got the picture. I was a lean mean hazardous duty machine who was totally invisible to the untrained eye. I quickly dropped to the

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Scholarship Awards

Three UCF Technical Writing Majors are Awarded Scholarships

by Dr. Dan Jones

In April three UCF technical writing undergraduates received special recognition.

Jenna Elliott was awarded an ACM SIGDOC Undergraduate scholarship. "SIGDOC is the Association of Computing Machinery (ACM) Special Interest Group for DOCumentation - a society of students and experienced practitioners and academics dedicated to furthering the technical communication profession."

Jenna is a senior at the University of Central Florida earning a Bachelor's degree in English with a concentration in Technical Writing and a minor in

Magazine Journalism. She is deeply interested in the editorial aspect of creating and producing documents. After graduation in May 2004, Jenna aspires to attend graduate school, earning a degree in professional writing or magazine journalism.

Also, two students were awarded scholarships from the UCF Department of English: Shannon Callhan received the Frances R. Lefkowitz Scholarship, and Bonnie Spivey received the Jean C. Combs Memorial Scholarship.

Shannon is also a senior at UCF and could complete the

requirements for her Bachelor's degree in English with a concentration in Technical Writing this fall (2003); however, she intends to pursue Honors in the Major. She will begin her honors thesis in the fall and graduate next spring (2004).

While attending school full-time, Shannon works in the Office of Special Programs, part of UCF's College of Engineering and Computer Science. She is a member of the STC, the National Scholars Honors Society, and the National Society of Collegiate Scholars.

Bonnie is a senior in the technical writing program at

UCF. She is a student member of the Orlando chapter of STC as well as a member of the chapter's Education Committee and special needs SIG. Bonnie is also President of UCF's technical writing club, Future Technical Communicators, a student-run organization that hosts and teaches regularly scheduled Saturday tool skills workshops and promotes student attendance at local STC meetings.

After she graduates next spring, Bonnie plans on working at a summer internship and then returning to UCF to earn her Master's degree.

Mission, cont'd

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floor of my office, crawled up to my doorway, and checked to make sure there were no unfriendlies in the area. I proceeded to Cathi's doorway, about a foot and a half due north. I was able to enter her office doorway unnoticed. Now came the toughest part of the mission. I silently crawled up behind the chair in which she was sitting, again unnoticed. I guess those "How to sneak back home after a late night of card playing without waking your wife" lessons really are paying off. I carefully stood up behind her, my M16 ready, and with my dental mirror looked at the label of the shirt she was wearing. MISSION ABORT!!!!!! She's wearing a dress not a shirt! MISSION ABORT!!!!!!!!!!

I had to think quickly about this one. There's nothing worse than getting caught on an aborted mission and spending time at the Intuitive POW camp in Sanford. I quickly dropped to the ground with the gentleness of a falling unpaid invoice and stealthily crawled out of her office and into mine while quietly closing my door. Whew that was a close one!!

I quietly changed back into my civvies and secured my mission equipment for the next mission. I then went to my trusty PC, brought up the file containing the shirt distribution, and there it was – Cathi Balboa, men's *** but prefers a women's sized shirt in *** [still protecting the innocent!].

Mission accomplished. I hope I addressed this to all the appropriate people. The original e-mail destroyed itself 15 seconds after I read it.

On the Precipice of Verbal Madness!!

Word Mint V: To Thine Ownself Be True; to Everyone Else ... Taradiddlefy!

by Dan Voss

Counter-taradiddlefication (n.). The act of cutting through an attempt to prevaricate by means of pretentious nonsense; the recognition and rejection of verbal persiflage in the interest of gaining the truth. From *counter-taradiddlefy* (v.), meaning to penetrate subtle misrepresentation or outright falsehood via exceptional linguistic perspicacity. Opposite of *taradiddlefication* (n.), meaning the process of deliberately creating confusion via complex and nefarious verbal obfuscation; from *taradiddlefy* (v.), meaning to divert from truth by means of elaborate deception. Root word is *taradiddle* (n.), meaning "a fib" or "pretentious nonsense." Etymology of "taradiddle" is unknown. According to Merriam-Webster's *Word of the Day*, "taradiddle" has been attributed to the verb "diddle," meaning "to cheat," but this may turn out to be pop-

Employment Tip

Job Agents and Resume Visibility

by Richard Phipps, STC Employment Committee

In this month's employment tip, I'd like to share with you a way to automate your Internet job searches, and a way to easily keep your résumé in front of the eyes of recruiters. The best way to automate your Internet job search is to make use of a tool called an "Agent." Many of the large job sites like Monster.com, Careerbuilder.com, and others all have a job search agent feature that will use the criteria that you enter into them to automatically email you matching jobs as soon as they're posted. Once you've set up your agent, job openings will flow effortlessly into your email inbox, saving you hours of time searching multiple Internet job sites.

Did you know that recruiters also have an Agents feature too? It's true. Recruiters have the ability to use agents that will automatically email them whenever a résumé is posted that match their predetermined criteria. To maximize your résumé's exposure, and to keep your résumé fresh, make a small change to it every week or so. Each update will be advantageous in two ways; it will trigger a new hit on a recruiter's résumé agent therefore sending it out to the recruiters again; and it will keep it at the top of the list of searches that recruiters perform. When recruiters perform ad-hoc searches for résumés on any résumé database, the search results always return the most recently dated résumés first. It's a sure fire way to keep your name near the top of the list.

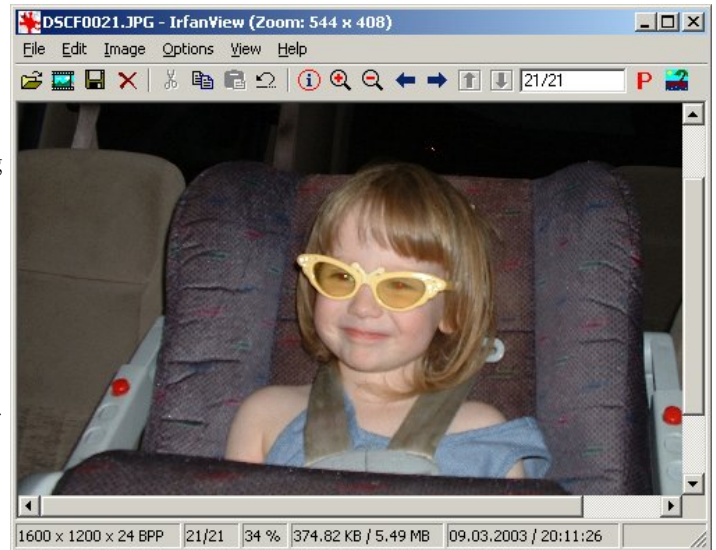
By coupling your résumé updating efforts with the effective use of agents, you'll have a simple strategy for improving your visibility and maximizing the use of technology in your job search. Best of luck to you!

pycock. It has also been linked to the Old English verb "didrian," meaning "to deceive," but since "didrian" has not been observed in conversation or print for 9 centuries, this connection may prove to be linguistic tommyrot. A third possibility is a complex Latinate derivation originating in the term "excretia bovinus." Examples: (1) Parents of teenagers have to practice counter-taradiddlefication on a regular basis to discern the true nature of their offspring's evening and weekend pursuits. (2) Harry tried to convince Marsha that he had been working late on Thursday, but the damning presence of his bowling ball on the back seat of his car and the tell-tale aroma of ABC Light on his breath told her he had been trying to taradiddlefy her—again.

Handy Graphics Program**Tool Tips: Irfanview***by David Coverston*

Occasionally I find that I or someone I know needs a graphics viewer that has a few more capabilities than MS Paint or the Imaging program that comes bundled with some Windows operating systems. Just recently I needed something that would display JPEG files so that they would fit in a window without having to scroll back and forth to see all of the image. Not too long after that I needed a viewer for my Dad so that he could resize and print some photos I had scanned for him. In neither case did I want a complex, expensive graphics editor.

I found just the program I needed to solve both of these problems. What if I told you this program also let you crop graphics and has a batch conversion function? What if I told you it can read over sixty graphics file formats and a dozen or so multimedia formats? And what if I told you that it supports filters for special effects, TWAIN scanners, and lets you create your own screensavers. Now what if I tell you that this program is free? Sound too good to be true? Then head on over to <http://www.irfanview.com/> and try it out. Irfanview (pronounced "EarfanView") is a free (for non-commercial use) graphic viewer that runs on Windows 9x/ME/NT/2000/XP.



Photographed: The lovely and talented Miss Grace Coverston

To get all this functionality, you have to download plug-ins, but they are also free. You can download all of them in one file right from the homepage, too. The plug-ins add unique functions to Irfanview, such as the ability to play flash files, show EXIF information from JPG files, and use Filter Factory 8BF files (Photoshop PlugIns).

Another thing about Irfanview I really like is that it does not automatically change your file extension associations. It does give you a way to associate the extensions with the program later. And you can browse an entire folder of files by opening the first file in a folder and using the space bar to open the next file. That way you can see what is really in each picture instead of straining your eyes looking at tiny thumbnails.

I could tell you about viewing animated GIFs, ICO files and more, but let me simply recommend that you download it and try it. Even if you have a full-fledged graphics editing program, you might find that you will get some use from a handy little program like this.

April Meeting: Employment Progression*by Bob Shydo*

The employment progression was broken down into seven topics, each having one or two expert moderators from local companies. There was one round table per topic. The progression was broken down into four 20 minute sessions. Each participant picking the four topics of interest they wanted to participate in.

The program started with a bang. The rumble of many voices filled the room like a beehive on mother's day. After fifteen minutes had passed I shouted out "**FIVE MINUTES TO GO!**". This was received about as well as telling my son that it was nearing bedtime and he would have to shut off the TV.

I counted down another two minutes and shouted "**THREE MINUTES TO GO!**" Now both the participants and

moderators we giving me evil looks. I was beginning to feel intimidated.

But then I remembered that President Mike told me that this wouldn't be easy but to remember that I had him behind me. So I then after another quick two minutes I called out the last warning "**ONE MINUTE TO GO, PREPARE TO FINISH UP YOUR DISCUSSIONS!**".

Now if you really wanted to hear a loud rumble this was it. For one solid minute each table had up to eight people each talking to get the last tidbit of information out of the discussion. Then the finale "**PLEASE STOP YOUR DISCUSSIONS and SWITCH TABLES!**".

(Continued on page 6)

April Meeting, cont'd

(Continued from page 5)

Well, you get the format. This was repeated three more times, each session a new learning experience. When it was all over everyone agreed that this was one great information exchange and that much useful information was shared. Because of the number of reservations we received we had to expand to two rooms for this session, and the room was full. The Hospitality Committee did a great job with the food and refreshments. This was Cajun night and the food was great.

We are in the process of collecting copies of the handouts to put on the chapter website for reference. Check the website in a few weeks and they should be loaded by then.

Below is a list of the topics, presenters and their company and a short description of each topic that was handed out prior to the program to be used as a topic reference.

Topic	Presenter(s)	Description
Working with a Recruiter	Christopher Stubbs , CBS Search Associates	How to prepare for and what to expect when you decide to work with a profession recruiter.
Job Search Tips	Richard Phipps , CIBER, Inc.	Steps everyone should consider when beginning a job search. Specific resources that can and should be used for a job search will also be discussed.
Contract Work and Freelancing	Barbara Odom , Barbara Odom and Associates, Inc.	What to expect if you decide to change your employment status to contract work. How to prepare for and what to expect when you decide to become a freelancer.
Networking and Getting Your Foot in the Door	Cathi Balboa , Intuitive Information, Inc. Mike Murray , Lockheed Martin	How to build and maintain an active network of resources. This discussion group will also review certain techniques that you can use to get your foot in the door so you will be considered for the next step.
A Corporate Perspective	Pat Reed-Reimer , AT&T, & W.C. Wiese , Lockheed Martin	What is a company looking for in a technical communicator? Staffed by managers from Central Florida operations of two Fortune 500 companies who maintain a full-time staff of technical communicators.
Resumes, Cover Letters, and Portfolios	Dan Voss , Lockheed Martin	Polishing your resume, cover letter, and portfolio gets you the interview. Practical tips on resumes, cover letters, and portfolios, both conventional and online. Time permitting, "quick-look" reviews of resumes and portfolios will be provided.
Interviewing	Patti Strandberg , Lockheed Martin	Nailing the interview gets you the job. Strategies, advice, and practical tips on effective interviewing.

May Meeting Preview**What's Hot in the World of User Assistance***by Barbara Odom*

We are moving through a significant transition period for online Help as many organizations are reappraising the needs of the user. Along with more activity in the areas of usability testing and information design, we are seeing some new technologies emerging for Help development. So, what's hot and what's not?

Please plan to join us Tuesday, May 27th at 6:30 at the Winter Park Civic Center for a panel discussion on the current state of online Help development. Our presentation will start with Janet Methven, who will discuss the

information architecture aspects of designing a Help system. Jon Kessler will talk to us about his experiences with using RoboHelp to create Win-Help files. Janette Farnsworth will briefly describe web Help, HTML, and other commonly used markup languages. Barbara Odom will finish with a description of "embedded Help," an emerging and intriguing type of user assistance.

Although handouts will be distributed, due to time constraints this discussion will be more of an overview than a detailed, online training session of any

one tool or Help format. As always, we'll wrap up with a question and answer period. A highlight of the evening will be a raffle drawing for a copy of RoboHelp, the application considered by many to be the tool of choice for Help development. Pizza and soft drinks will be served.

So come on by for some interesting conversation, fun food, and a chance to win a very valuable prize!

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

May 2003						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

MAY 2003 DATES TO REMEMBER

14th: Administrative Council Meeting

18th - 21st: STC Annual Conference - Dallas, TX

27th: STC Monthly Meeting - 6:30 p.m. at the Winter Park Civic Center.

JUNE 2003 DATES TO REMEMBER

11th: Administrative Council Meeting

24th: STC Year-End Banquet - TBA

June 2003						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

ORLANDO CHAPTER STC

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Orlando, Florida
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Chapter Meeting Schedule

- **May 27-** Panel Discussion on *Help*
- **June 24-** Year-end Banquet

Year-End Banquet



Be sure to mark your calendars for the Orlando Chapter End-of-the-Year Banquet being held on Tuesday, June 24th!

- ☒ See the awards distribution.
- ☒ Meet the new Chapter Council.
- ☒ Get to know your fellow Society members.
- ☒ Enjoy a great meal.

Watch for more details in the June Memo to Members and on the listserv.

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