



MEMO TO MEMBERS

"Creating and supporting a forum for communities of practice in the profession of technical communication."



STC Orlando Chapter: A 2003 Chapter of Distinction

Volume 3, Issue 4 ❖ December 2003

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(Except where noted, all entries in quotes were originally spoken by Yogi Berra, New York Yankees catcher and Hall of Famer.)

From the President's Desk

What Do You Plan to Achieve in the New Year With Your STC Membership?

By Mike Murray, Orlando Chapter President

(Except where noted, all entries in quotes were originally spoken by Yogi Berra, New York Yankees catcher and Hall of Famer.)

Yogi Berra, one of the greatest philosophers of our time, once said, "If you don't know where you're going, you might end up somewhere else." While many still debate whether Yogi is a little off-center or really quite brilliant, there is a lot of wisdom in his well-known quotes.

"It's tough to make predictions, especially about the future."

Once again, Yogi is right, which is why goal setting is so important. What do you need to do to get where you want to be? For example, do you need to feel more comfortable in front of a crowd? We have lots of opportunities for that in our chapter, and only that kind of repetition makes it easier. What's more, we're your friends – we *want* you to succeed and will support you in any way you need.

Need more training in, say, marketing writing? Check the chapter and Society Web sites where you can find tons of related articles. Start a Marketing Writing Special Interest Group in the chapter – we'll show you how. Attend the 51st Annual Conference in Baltimore, where there are sure to be related sessions you can attend. There are just so many ways to achieve your goals, so decide what they are and *write them down*.

Lack of goal setting is one of the reasons why many people feel they haven't achieved what they want. Start by defining for yourself your vision, dreams, and desires. Make this specific and exciting so that you feel inspired to follow through with action.

"Baseball [and goal setting] is 90% mental,

the other half is physical," says Yogi. Take the first step and set your goals!

Planning is crucial!

Once you've set your goals, you need to decide what you're going to do to reach them. Again, the Orlando chapter provides many resources you can tap to help you along the way. Need help in establishing your plan? Get with one of the chapter

Lack of goal setting is one of the reasons why many people feel they haven't achieved what they want.

leaders (red badges) and ask for his or her advice. We'll be very pleased to mentor you on ways you can reach your goals. Above all, do something every day, no matter how small, toward achieving your goals. Also be sure to watch what successful members do. Pick their brains, read about their activities in *Memo to Members*. As Yogi says, "You can observe a lot by watching," or "If you can't imitate him, don't copy him."

"Fake it until you make it!"

Just briefly, I depart from Yogi and borrow an expression from the "12-step" programs. When I took over as president of the Orlando chapter in the summer of 2002, at the beginning of every meeting I announced, "Welcome to the Orlando chapter of the Society for Technical Communication. We are the fastest growing, most dynamic chapter in all of STC." That wasn't exactly true at the time, but *it is now!* Your brain believes whatever you tell it, whether it's the truth or not. That's why positive self-talk is so important and why you should visualize yourself with your goal or goals fulfilled

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Standing Out From the Crowd in Job Interviews

By Richard Phipps, Employment Committee Manager

In my many years of interviewing candidates, I found that the most memorable candidates were those who made the interview process as comfortable for the interviewing team as we did for them. Not only were they prepared for the interview as would be expected, they also kept the interview conversational, interesting, and flowing. Those candidates stand out in our minds today, even though some of them interviewed with us years ago. So what was the secret weapon that distinguished them from the crowd? And can it be learned?



I've summarized some of the traits that we found in those distinguished candidates. I've also noted some tips on each trait, and I've included some questions that you may want to consider when preparing for your interviews.

CONVERSATIONAL INTERVIEW STYLE

A conversational interview style is by far the most distinguishing trait held by good interviewees. At the end of the meeting, if we feel like we had a good discussion-like conversation with a candidate rather than a yes/no question and answer session, then that candidate has distinguished himself or herself from the crowd. Yes, the interview process is an exchange of information, but it doesn't have to be a cut-and-dry process. Do you treat interviews like a question and answer session, or do you take on a more conversational approach?

Be sure to close your job interview by thanking the person or persons who conducted it.

USE OF COMEDY

Keep your Jay Leno monologue routine at home, but do feel free to use comedy when appropriate. It can be quite the icebreaker, but only use it when and if appropriate, and keep it clean.

HAVE QUESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEWER

Again to keep with our conversational theme, have questions for the interviewer. A good conversation occurs when both parties get to express themselves. The interviewer will appreciate the chance to share his or her knowledge about the job/role/company with you. By coming to the interview prepared with questions that you want answered, you'll be on your way to having a more conversational style interview. Additionally, the correct use of questions during your

interview can be used to pinpoint the employer's problem/task-at-hand and allows you the opportunity to showcase your talents around solving the problem.

If your interview is coming to a close and the interviewer asks you if you have any further questions and your mind goes blank, should you mumble something out just to comply? Absolutely not! It's all right to pass on final questions, if you simply cannot think of anything further you need to ask. Simply say, "No, thank you. You've covered all my concerns."

P.A.R. (PROBLEM/ACTIONS/RESULTS)

Remember the P.A.R. principle when explaining your accomplishments and when possible, relate them to the problems that your prospective employer is having. Explain the problem, what actions you (or your team) took to solve that problem and the results of your actions. Remember that results ultimately increase revenue, decrease costs, or improve operational efficiency.

Keep your Jay Leno monologue routine at home, but do feel free to use comedy when appropriate.

A GOOD CLOSE

Be sure to close your job interview by thanking the person or persons who conducted it. Showing your sincere gratitude (perhaps accompanied by a warm handshake) is not only polite, but it also closes an interview on a positive note. When there are a lot of candidates being considered for a position, small gestures like this help you stand out from the crowd.

THANK-YOU NOTES

Because it's done so rarely, candidates who write thank-you notes to their interviewers also stand out from the crowd. Request business cards during your interview in order to get the correct contact information and titles.

SOME SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Asking intelligent, concise questions is a good way to end an interview session. Your questions can deal with the job opening or the company in general. It's a good idea to prepare closing questions ahead of time to avoid a last-minute "mental block." **Best bet:** don't ask questions about perks like vacation and benefits. Instead focus your questions on the job's important duties or when the company expects to make a final hiring decision

The following questions are presented only as interviewing guidelines. They are meant to help you prepare for the

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Memo to Members

Standing Out, continued

(Continued from page 2)

interview and for use as a foundation for holding a conversational style interview, therefore they can be asked at any point during the interview, not just at the end. Some questions may or may not be appropriate for your interviewing situation.

- Why is this position open?
- How often has it been filled in the past five years? What were the main reasons?
- What would you like done differently by the next person who fills this position?
- What are some of the objectives you would like to see accomplished in this job?
- What is most pressing? What would you like to have done in the next three months?
- What are some of the long-term objectives you would like to see completed?
- What are some of the more difficult problems one would have to face in this position?
- How do you think these could best be handled?
- What type of support does this position receive in terms of people, finances, etc?
- What freedom would I have in determining my own work objectives, deadlines, and methods of measurement?
- What advancement opportunities are available for the person who is successful in this position, and within what time frame?
- In what ways has this organization been most successful in terms of products and services over the years?
- What significant changes do you foresee in the near future?
- How is one evaluated in this position?
- How is success identified and measured in the company? **MtM**



Richard Phipps is the Consulting Services Manager for CIBER, Inc, an international information technology consulting company. In his seven years with CIBER, he has served as a National Recruiter, a Regional Recruiter, and as the Recruiting Manager for CIBER's Orlando area operation.



SIGN ME UP! 

STC TELEPHONE SEMINARS

Effective Web Sites: Structure, Navigation & Graphics

presented by
Jean-Luc Doumont



The seminar will propose a simple but effective model for thinking about the structure and navigation of a Web site—one that can be used both to analyze existing sites and to design or implement new ones. While perusing various Web pages, we will discuss three main themes: how to structure Web sites so visitors do not get lost (structure); how to phrase and display hyperlinks to make them highly visible and allow visitors to make informed decisions about where to go next (navigation); and how to format a Web site to reveal its structure and facilitate its navigation (graphics).

**Wednesday,
January 14th, 2004
1⁰⁰ - 2³⁰ PM ET**

Speaker Jean-Luc Doumont teaches and provides advice on professional speaking, writing, and graphing. He also trains trainers and facilitates any process that requires solid structuring and effective communication. For more information about Jean-Luc, see his Web site at <http://www.JLConsulting.be>.



Demonstrating the Value of Technical Communication Products & Services

presented by Saul Carliner

This entertaining, informative, and interactive presentation will:

- identify common challenges to our value posed by both management and technical professionals
- explain that value is a perception, not a formula
- suggest types of data that support your value to the organization
- propose a framework for collecting that data
- discuss how and to whom you can most effectively present the data

**Wednesday,
January 28th, 2004
1⁰⁰ - 2³⁰ PM ET**

Participants will use the information to solve "real world" cases in which technical communicators must demonstrate their value.

Saul Carliner is an assistant professor of educational technology at Concordia University in Montreal. Also an industry consultant, Saul holds a Ph.D. in instructional technology from Georgia State University.

STC Transformation Committee

Transformation: The TeamFrom <http://www.stc.org/transformation.asp>

Leadership can be quite a challenge. One reason is that in STC our leaders are all volunteers who must also earn a living—even those members you elect to the board of directors. In addition, STC leaders are dedicated to making a difference in this diverse group of professions that we call technical communication. With that commitment in mind, the board of directors continues to implement the various phases of the STC transformation that actually began with the branding initiative. We realize that transformation is not really “new” to our profession, because we’ve been evolving for the last 50 years, but everyone knows that for our profession to survive and for STC to provide the best value as a professional organization, we must constantly strive to improve.

The board of directors realized that it would take a specialized team to lead this effort, so at the May 2003 board meeting, a “core” Transformation Team was appointed. That team developed a vision, goals, and principles to guide them. The people involved represent many of the communities of practice within STC. Two past Society presidents, the current president, and the two current vice presidents (who will be STC presidents over the next two years) are all working closely together so any recommended programs and improvements can be implemented consistently in the future.

The board also felt it was necessary to provide the membership with a means of responding to and submitting ideas related to the transformation. The team created a blog (this web log is at <http://trans4mation.typepad.com>) so members can present and discuss their ideas, concerns, and issues.

The Transformation Team then added representatives who could provide the chapter, SIG, international, marketing, management, financial, business owner, and historical perspectives to their committee. They called this “extended group” the Stakeholders. Let me introduce each of our 20 Transformation Team members and share the perspective they each bring to the team.

- Andrea Ames: Corporate management, education, large chapter
- Rahel Bailie: Canadian, business owner, medium chapter
- Jon Baker: Regional, financial, large chapter
- Mike Bates: Proposal writer, corporate management, medium chapter
- Judy Glick-Smith: Management, business owner, Senior Advisory Council (SAC), large chapter. Judy started the

Leadership initiative.

- Bonni Graham: Regional, business owner, metrics, medium chapter
- Sandra Harner: Educator, faculty advisor to a student chapter
- Peter Herbst: Historical, office 20 years, management
- Vici Koster-Lenhardt: Regional, international (European), corporate management, small chapter
- Suzanna Laurent: Management, business owner, small chapter
- Taryn Light: Large chapter, former president
- Whitney Quesenbery: SIG, large chapter
- Ginny Redish: Former board member, SIG, added value, large chapter
- Jim Romano: International, business owner, metrics, large chapter
- Fred Sampson: Large chapter, current president, offshoring
- Ed See: Corporate management, marketing executive, large chapter
- Mary Jo Stark: Financial, subject-matter expert, education, large chapter
- Bill Stolgitis: Legal, historical, management, office
- Thea Teich: Management, marketing, business owner, finance, medium chapter
- Debbie Wiles: Large chapter, current president

This and other articles will be posted on the Transformation page of the STC web site in the coming weeks. To offer feedback to the team, log on to the Transformation Team Blog at trans4mation.typepad.com.

As the team grew, we realized that a Steering committee was needed to facilitate and approve the critical activities of the Transformation Team, including John Nardone’s work. Members of the Steering committee are Mary Jo Stark, Peter Herbst, Thea Teich, Ed See, Andrea Ames, and Suzanna Laurent.

The board of directors has engaged John Nardone, a strategy and marketing consultant, to give us professional assistance in our transformation process. In addition to being a “friend of the Society,” John brings us a wealth of experience. That experience will help us ensure the transformation is successful. He has developed a structure for the entire process, is facilitating the process, and is providing unbiased experience and perspective. You can read about his credentials at <http://trans4mation.typepad.com> under “The transformation process.”

In the next communication, we will share the Transformation principles and explain the transformation process.

Memo to Members

Word Mint XI: It Ain't Pretty!

Ultracontrapulchritudinousness Rears Its Ugly Head

By Dan Voss

Ultracontrapulchritudinousness (n). Extremely unattractive, to the point of physical repugnance. Sometimes shortened to UCP and used colloquially as a noun referring to a person who displays the quality of ultracontrapulchritudinousness (see Figure 1) as in “When Derek got a look at his blind date and discovered what a UCP she was, he faked a knee injury during the first dance and limped out of the club.” Derived from ultracontrapulchritudinous (adj), meaning taking ugliness to an entirely new level. The prefix “ultra” creates a hyperbolic form of contrapulchritudinous (adj), meaning very unattractive; antonym of pulchritudinous (adj), meaning characterized by great physical attractiveness. Root word is pulchritude (n), meaning compelling alluring come-hither attractiveness, which is commonly used as an example of anti-onomatopoeia (see “Word Mint Question” below), meaning a word that does NOT sound like what it means. Single men who doubt the veracity of this linguistic classification, try sidling up to a sultry vixen at the Bithlo Singles Emporium next Friday night and using this as a pickup line: “Excuse me, but I just couldn’t help being dazzled by your remarkable pulchritude. What’s your sign?” Unless you are fortunate enough to have



Quintessential
ultracontrapulchritudinousness.

found a Bryn Mawr English major in the Bithlo Singles Emporium (in which case, drop the part about the sign), you are well advised to wear a helmet during this experiment. Examples: (1) Protecting the shoreline. The sale of thong bikinis in size 22 ought to be inherently illegal, as the mere existence of such a product virtually ensures a hideously *ultracontrapulchritudinous* display on the public beach. (2) Personal ads. MWM professional 56, 5-8, athletic, non-smoker, financially secure, seeking MBF professional, 45, trim, non-smoker, for romance and possible long-term relationship. No *UCPs*, please. (3) Return to running soap opera. After running across the word “pulchritude” while cheating and checking the answer key for her Sunday *New York Times* crossword puzzle, Martha turned to Harry one night and said suddenly, “Harry, do you still find me pulchritudinous?” Harry stared rapidly at Martha for a moment, then hurriedly blurted, “You know I’ve always found you pulchritudinous, Martha.” Martha brooded the rest of the evening, trying to figure out whether Harry was actually using the term in its original sense or was inherently resonating with its anti-onomatopoeiacal properties. **MtM**



WORD MINT QUESTION:

Did you know that “onomatopoeia” is one of very few words in the English language with four consecutive vowels? “Hawaiian” is another. If you use luau as a verb, as in “we ‘luaued’ all night last night” (OK, so it’s a bit of a stretch), that’s a third. Then there’s the only word in the English language with five consecutive vowels. Does anybody want to venture a guess?

(or get you tossed out of the bar, depending upon what kind of watering hole you frequent). It might work with the Bryn Mawr English major.

ANSWER: The word *queene*, meaning a line (n.) or to form a line (v.t.); is yet another 4-consecutive-vowel word, but one with growth potential. You see, when you change the verb to the present participle, you have the option of dropping or retaining the silent final e. Obviously, in the interest of unequalled linguistic accomplishment, the alert sesquipedalian scholar opts to retain the final e, creating the only legitimate word in the English language with 5 consecutive vowels: “*queening*.” Consider that little nugget your Christmas present from Word Mint. Use it wisely; it could quite likely win you a few bucks in bar bets

What Do You Plan, continued

(Continued from page 1)

until they actually are. I promise, you’ll get there much sooner. Start visualizing now where you want to be in the Orlando chapter. In the deeply philosophical words of “the man” himself, “In theory there is no difference between theory and practice. In practice there is.”

“When you get to a fork in the road, take it!”

You are in a great position in the Orlando Chapter of

Distinction to achieve your goals. You’ll never again have as many resources and as much support as you have right now. As a caveat, “I didn’t really say everything I said,” which by now probably feels like “Déjà vu all over again!” I’m always available to help, but remember that “I usually take a two-hour nap from one to four,” and even then, “If I didn’t wake up, I’d still be sleeping.”

You gotta love that guy! **MtM**

Tool Tips: Spyware

By David Coverston, Chapter Secretary

A relative recently asked me for help with his computer. The computer was randomly, or so it seemed, trying to connect to the Internet and disrupting his system so badly that he was not able to use his computer. I told him his problem was spyware and gave him a CD with the tools he needed to remove it. I'm going to tell you how to do the same thing.

WHAT IS SPYWARE?

Spyware, sometimes called adware, is a software program that gathers demographic and usage information from your computer without your knowledge or consent. It then sends this information back to a company, often through the Internet. Usually the gathered information is sold to a company that uses it to target advertising at you. Often that information is resold to other companies, who in turn sell it again.

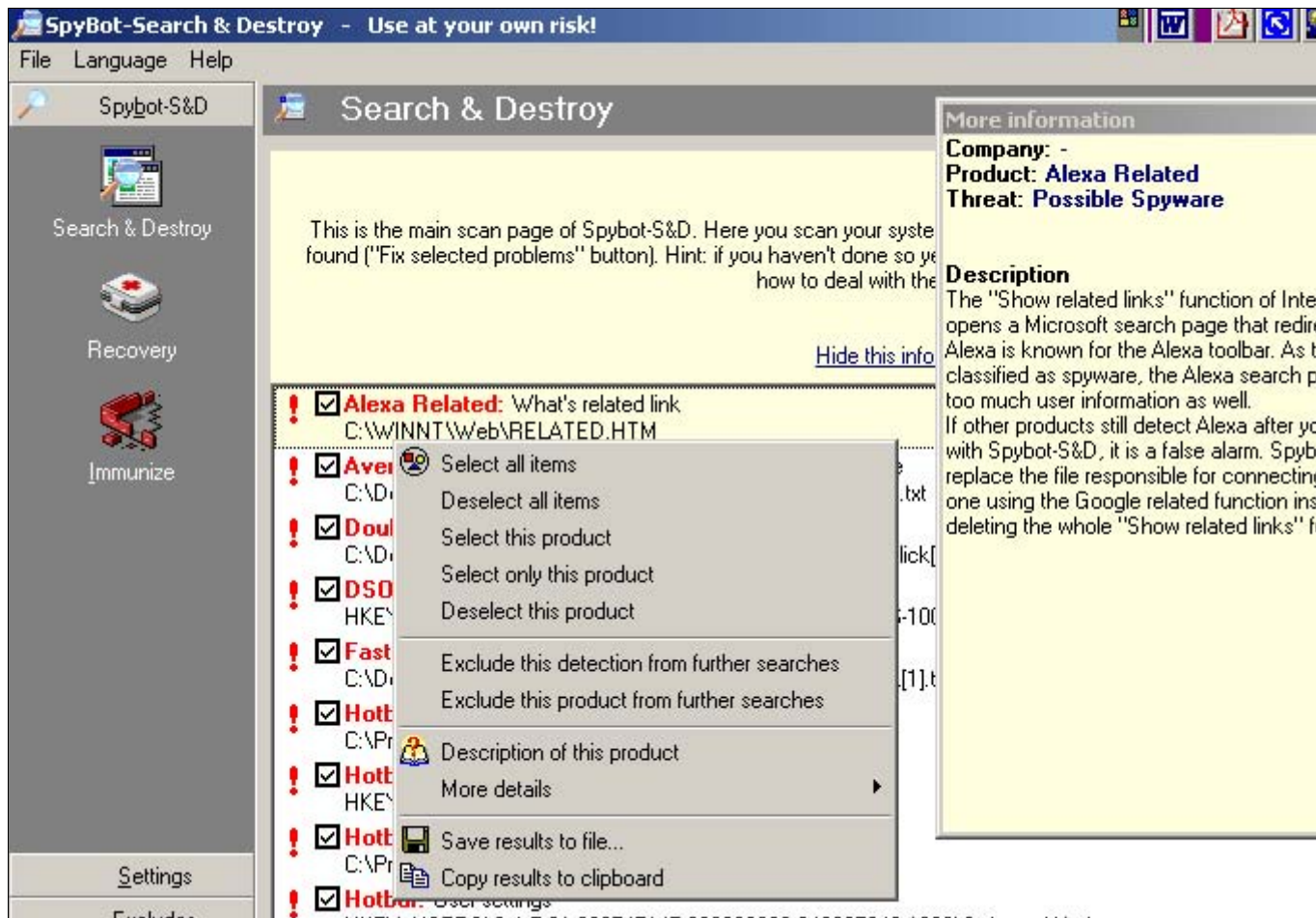


Figure 1: The Spybot interface

One problem with these programs is that there is almost no way for the user to actually control what data is being sent. Although they usually collect information for advertising purposes, spyware has the capability to do anything any program can do—monitor keystrokes, scan your hard drive, read your cookies, change your default homepage, interface with your Web browser to determine what Web sites you are visiting, and report all this information back to the spyware's author. It can even notify the spyware company of attempts to modify or remove it from the system. Spyware can read and disclose any data on, entering or exiting your computer, setting you up perfectly for identity theft. It can cause system slowdown, browser crashes, and even system crashes.

HOW DID I GET THAT ON MY PC?

Many games that you download from the Internet contain spyware. Just visiting a Web page or clicking on a Web ad can install

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Tool Tips, continued

(Continued from page 6)

spyware on your machine if your Internet security controls aren't properly set. Many “free” software programs install software that monitors your activity on your machine. File sharing applications are some of the worst. Don't think you are alone. A recent report from the research firm GartnerG2 says that more than 20 million people have installed spyware. One system at an Albuquerque law firm had over 300 spyware programs installed on it, according to a *PC Magazine* article. The problem has gotten so bad that laws have been introduced in the United States Congress to curb the practice. Laws written to prohibit collection of information from children are useless against spyware, which doesn't know who is using the computer.

COMMON SPYWARE PROGRAMS

The spyware Web site Spyware-Guide.com (<http://www.spywareguide.com/>) has a database of spyware programs. Programs you might have on your machine include Gator, Xupiter, Kazaa, and Comet Cursor. Do any of these names look familiar?

HOW DO I PROTECT MYSELF?

You can protect yourself by:

- Reading the end user license agreements (EULAs) for software you are installing. Some applications will not run if the spyware parts are removed. Decide if you really need that application
- Using spyware removal programs
- Setting higher Internet security options
- Not opening email attachments if you are not expecting them from someone you know
- Using a firewall.

Here is some good news—the tools you need to fix and protect your machine are free, and here is how you do it:

1. Go to <http://spybot.safer-networking.de/>, download and install Spybot- Search & Destroy.
2. Run Spybot, then click the Search & Destroy button. This may take a few minutes, so be patient. (See Figure 1).
3. Double-click an item to see more information about it. Spybot checks files, cookies, registry entries, and other items that a lack of time and space prevent me from discussing now. The help included in the program will get you started in the right direction.
4. Go to <http://www.lavasoftusa.com/>, download and install Ad-aware Standard Edition.
5. Run Ad-aware. (See Figure 2). If Spybot misses something, Ad-aware will usually find it. If any items are found by Ad-aware, select them and click Continue. Click OK to remove the selected items from your system.

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Figure 2: The Ad-aware interface

Tool Tips, continued

(Continued from page 7)

- Go to <http://www.zonelabs.com/store/content/home.jsp>, download and install ZoneAlarm. (See Figure 3). This program will alert you if any software on your system is trying to “dial home.” You will have to spend a few minutes to configure it to allow programs that you allow to access the Internet. Now any time you install a new program, whether intentionally or by accident, ZoneAlarm will alert you that a new program is trying to access the Internet. It will also allow you to shut down all Internet traffic to and from your machine if a site tries to hijack your browser by right-clicking the icon in the tray area and selecting Stop all Internet activity.

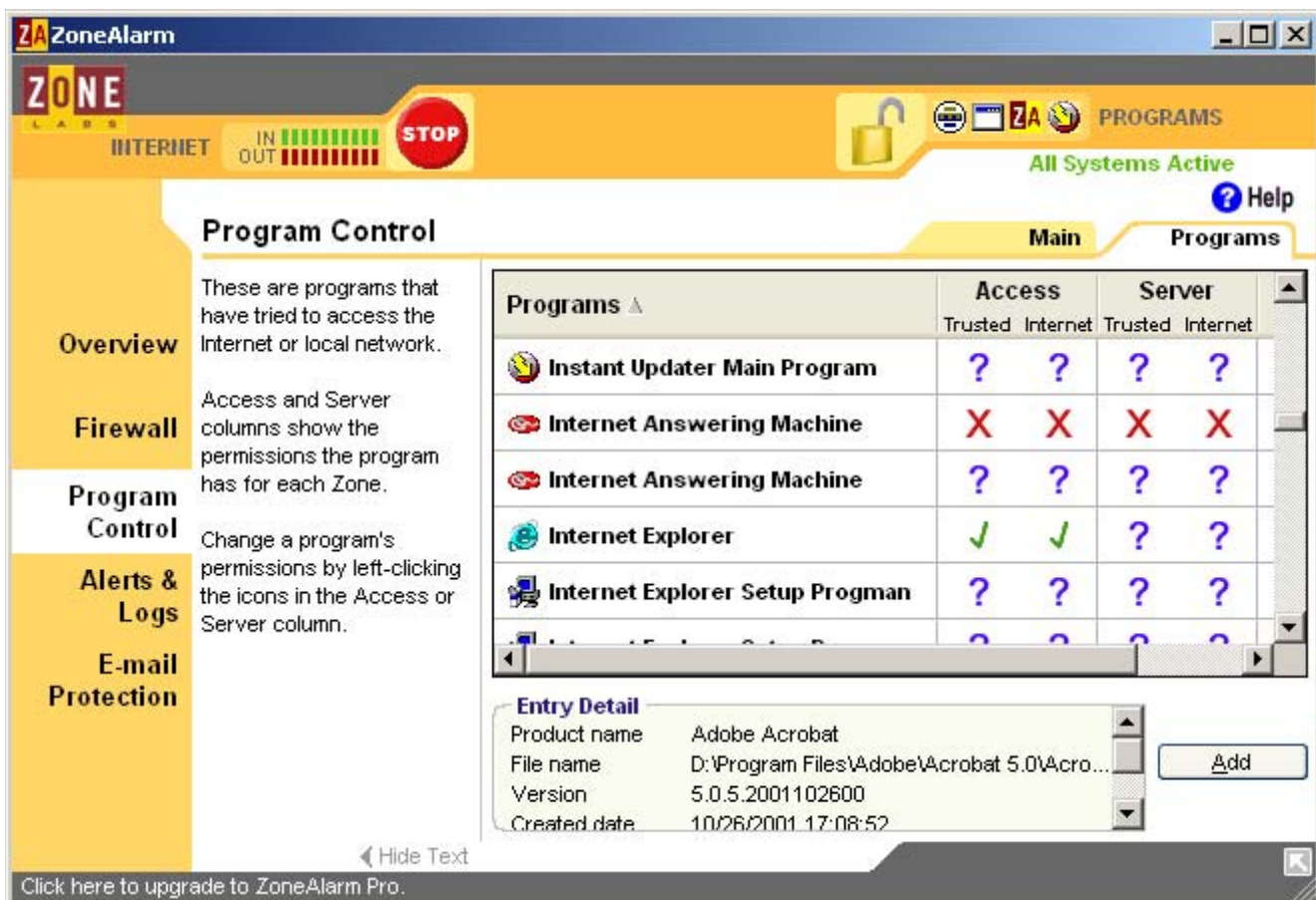


Figure 3: The ZoneAlarm interface

All of these programs are free, so you have no reason not to utilize these excellent resources.

- Finally, on the Tools menu of Internet Explorer select Internet Options, then choose the Security tab, click Custom level and set all ActiveX controls to Disable or to Prompt. This will stop many programs from installing themselves if you view a Web page that is set up to install them.

It will take you a while to set all this up, but the security and peace of mind it will bring is sure worth it. **MtM**

Tuesday, December 16th: Triangle Reprographics
Reprographics Tour/Social Gathering

By Greg White, Vice President

Our December meeting will be one to remember. We are going to tour Triangle Reprographics followed by a social gathering at Donato's Pizzeria. The tour will last between one hour to one hour and a half starting at 6:30. This gives us plenty of time to do some early networking afterwards at Donato's. The tour is 100% FREE! The following is a brief on Triangle Reprographics. See you there.



For over 30 years, Triangle Reprographics has been an industry leader, providing a variety of services to the business community. Established as a blueprinter and materials supplier to architects and engineers in 1973, Triangle Reprographics has evolved and grown into a full-service resource for a wide variety of clients. Current services include: digital color imaging, diazo reproduction, quick copy, offset printing, CAD plotting, mounting and laminating, and photographic reproduction, as well as drafting, plotting, and diazo supplies.

ATTENTION STUDENTS! This is what you've been waiting for—exposure to the real business world. You can't afford to miss this tour!

Don't forget to **RSVP to Greg White at gwhite@tadpgs.com**. See you Tuesday, December 16th at 6:30 PM! **MtM**

Jaffe Awards Judging Underway

By W.C. Wiese, Past Chapter President

It's true. The deadline has passed to submit your entry for this year's Gloria Jaffe Outstanding Technical Communicator Award. Contest Manager Alicia Fellure is now working with the Judging Committee to determine this year's winner, who will be recognized at our meeting in January at the University of Central Florida.



Gloria Jaffe

The award recognizes Central Florida businesses that have significantly benefited from insightful employment of technical communicators, along with the individual communicators themselves.



The Jaffe Award is named for Orlando Chapter founder and retired University of Central Florida technical communication professor Gloria Jaffe. Her leadership is reflected in the enduring communication values prized by the Orlando Chapter and in the professionalism of UCF graduates who had the opportunity to study with her.

Last year's award was won by Molly Townsend, Supervisor of Fixed Wing Communications at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control – Orlando.

Linda Mathis, Technical Publications & Training Manager for Comtech Systems, Inc. in Orlando, and Christina Payne, a technical writer with Lockheed Martin Enterprise Information Systems in Orlando, were runners-up. **MtM**

YOUR AD HERE

Memo to Members has a wide & varied readership and is distributed on our Web site monthly. Our monthly ad rates are as follows (prices are the same for black & white or color):

- Full-page ad \$90 One-quarter page \$30
- One-half page \$50 One-eighth page \$20

For more information, contact **Erika Coto**



Help Support Orlando-STC.
 Click on the button to go to Amazon.com. **Remember:** A percentage of your purchase is rebated to the Orlando Chapter when you use our click-through.

If You Missed Last Month's Meeting. . .

By David Coverston, Chapter Secretary

If you missed our last meeting, you missed an excellent overview of the editing process. Stephen Zygula kicked off the presentation with an explanation of three primary levels of editing—Developmental, Substantive, and Copy editing.

In developmental editing, you look at the big picture—the entire Web site or manuscript. This can be done both at the beginning and end of a project and is usually done by a senior or lead editor. Substantive editing looks at the content and the facts of a project. Substantive editing can have sub-levels, such as editing for organization, style, or voice.

Copy editing is editing for the small details. It adds polish and is the final edit on a product. Steve advises us to keep notes on every project.

Maggie Boreman gave us a look at project management and a great quote—“If necessity is the mother of invention, then desperation is the mother of sane project management!” The four major points of project planning are Planning, Estimating, Scheduling, and Working with other leaders. When planning a project, integrate writers from the start of the project. To ensure success, set achievable milestones, consider the focus, and integrate audience and client needs.

When estimating a project, an intuitive estimate is an underestimate. To get a better estimate, look at previous jobs of a similar nature. Extrapolating from a sampling can give a rough estimate, especially when you factor in any special considerations for the project. Maggie said something that many of us would like to impress upon managers, “You can have it good, fast, and cheap. Pick any two!”

Wendy Dye gave us insight from her experience editing computer games. You may not have realized this (I didn't), but

the gaming industry is now a \$20 billion industry, surpassing the film industry. In this type of editing, the writer/editor is considered part of the design team and is involved from the beginning of the project. Writers have input on character descriptions and the dialog in the game. To break into this field, she suggests freelancing and/or contracting on projects.

Mike Rosen spoke on usability studies and game editing. He told us that the most important part of a Role Playing Game (RPG) is the plot. Two tasks the writer or editor faces are editing for organization and editing for visual design.

“If necessity is the mother of invention, then desperation is the mother of sane project management!”

Cindy Hauptner outlined some differences between writing and editing for an online document versus a printed document. Although both look at visual design, an online design has to consider screen

resolution and projection qualities. And online documentation has a quite different perspective on document navigation. The editor must put himself in the place of a user and ask the question, “As the user moves around, can he tell where he is in the document?” One way to accomplish this is to use stationary text on the screen to give the user a context. In an online document, it is important having the words and graphics match and having consistent navigation throughout.

Karla Kitalong shared insights about editing online teaching materials. Some of the concepts involved in this type of editing are borrowed from film editing, such as the concept of “pacing.” Items to keep in mind with online materials are having terms displayed on the screen that are mentioned in the dialog, giving the users the ability to repeat something that they want to repeat, and not going too fast. Karla deserves a special thanks for coordinating the speakers and chairing the panel. **MtM**

Society News

**The online dues renewal period has past. If you have not completed your renewal online, you will be receiving paper copies of the renewal form in the mail soon.

**Need help encouraging your employers to sponsor your STC membership? Point them to the publication, “STC Can Help,” available via the STC Web site at: http://www.stc.org/PDF_Files/new_employer.pdf

**The 51st Annual Conference will be held May 9th - 12th, 2004, in Baltimore, MD. The deadline to submit a proposal for STC's 51st Annual Conference was August 1, 2003. If your proposal has been accepted, the booklet available at http://www.stc.org/Word_Files/Preparing_Your_Presentation_Web.doc contains valuable tips and information on how to present at the STC annual conference.



Ease the last-minute stress of the holidays by finishing your holiday



shopping online via the Amazon.com click-through on the STC-Orlando Web site or in this newsletter.

Orlando Chapter Lapel Pins!



Now available at our chapter meetings—the one-of-a-kind Orlando Chapter lapel pins.

Only \$5⁰⁰ Each

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2004 Job Fairs

Orlando EXPO CENTRE
500 W. Livingston Street, Orlando
Noon - 4:00 p.m.

- ★ January 28: Chairman's Job Fair
- ★ March 16: CFEC.org Job Fair
- ★ May 27: Mayor's Job Fair
- ★ July 14: CFEC.org Job Fair
- ★ September 9: Governor's Job Fair
- ★ November 4: CFEC.org Job Fair

For more information, visit the Central Florida Employment Council at:
<http://www.cfec.org/>
and select the "Job Fairs" link.

In Support of High School Tech Writing Competition

Chapter Leaders Visit Area High Schools

By Jon Kessler, Dan Jones, Karen Lane, Mike Murray, Bonnie Spivey, and Dan Voss

Chapter president Mike Murray, treasurer Karen Lane, and four members of the Education Committee were a smash hit in their visits to area high schools in September/October talking to science, English, and writing students about the principles of technical communication and successfully promoting the chapter's 8th Annual Central Florida High School Technical Writing competition.

The measure of success was both the 94 entries received in this year's competition—second highest in the history of the event and spanning four counties this year, including three schools that are participating for the first time—and in the warm reception the visitors received from their young hosts/hostesses.

President Mike claimed the "purple heart" among the hearty band of six speakers, taking on five—count 'em, five!—English and writing classes at Dr. Phillips High School and living to tell. Treasurer Karen braved two classes at Rockledge, representing our first classroom visit in Brevard County.

Competition coordinator Jon Kessler spoke to more than 60 English and science students at Winter Springs—which is determined to repeat the strong showing it made in last year's competition at both local and international levels.

Dr. Dan Jones made yet another successful sortie to Lake Brantley, a perennial contest powerhouse whose history with the competition (as well as with Dr. J) dates almost to its inception.

Education Committee manager Dan Voss and committee member Bonnie Spivey made a joint presentation to a class of gifted engineering students at Apopka High School, representing the first time the Blue Darters have entered our competition; and Dan also paid a visit to Deltona High School on his home turf—our first such excursion into Volusia County.

Following are the speakers' eyewitness accounts of their daring forays into the land of the young.



ROCKLEDGE ROCKS AFTER ROCKY START BY KAREN LANE

I visited two of Mrs. Ashton's classrooms of tenth graders on a beautiful Tuesday morning in mid-October. After a somewhat rocky start, owing to Murphy's Law as it applies to audio-visual equipment, I began the presentation with an introduction about myself and some general information about STC. The CD provided by the chapter helped break the ice and was a good accompaniment to my explanations about careers in technical communication. The students seemed interested in the variety of possibilities in the field.



(Continued on page 12)

Chapter Leaders Visit, continued

(Continued from page 11)

Mrs. Ashton is using our writing contest as an opportunity to teach the students how to write a science essay, so she is requiring that every student write a paper. She will forward to us those that are the most suitable, and we eagerly await these entries.



PANTHERS ON THE PROWL FOR WINNING PAPERS BY MIKE MURRAY



On October 23, it was my pleasure to speak with three English classes and two writing classes at Dr. Phillips High School. The instructor, Mary Ann Revell, promoted the visit in advance and announced extra credit for any student who submitted a paper. She emphasized after every class that she wanted as many students as possible to enter the competition. It was also a definite advantage that Ms. Revell had been a technical writer for two years in a former life.

The students were very receptive, and a number indicated they would be submitting papers. This marks the first time an Orange County high school has encouraged class-wide participation in our competition.

BEARS ON THE GROWL TO DEFEND THEIR LAURELS



BY JON KESSLER

I was invited by chemistry teacher Trent Daniel and English teacher Maureen Warner to present at Winter



Springs High School, which had a very strong showing in our 7th annual competition last year. I spoke to more than 60 tenth-grade English and science students assembled in the Media Center. This was basically a “new crop” from last year, but 11th graders Eric First and Andrew Lai, who took second and third, respectively, in last year’s international competition, got passes to attend the presentation. There’s no doubt they’ll be defending their laurels this year.

My presentation consisted of the 10-minute multimedia presentation on the competition in its entirety and the first 15 minutes of the multimedia briefing on technical communication. We stopped at the main menu and tunneled down into a couple categories. Then I coached the students on how to prepare winning entries. Overall, except for a couple of “goofballs” in the back row, the students were very attentive and responsive. They were clearly enthusiastic about participating in the competition and highly motivated to bring home a bunch more awards.



DELTONA HIGH BRINGS VOLUSIA INTO CONTEST FOR FIRST TIME BY DAN VOSS



My visit to Deltona High School was particularly satisfying, for a couple of reasons. First, it’s on my “home turf.” Our daughter Aaryn is a sophomore there and plays varsity volleyball, soccer, and track. (She does not, however, prepare entries in technical writing competitions!) Secondly, it represented the culmination of three years of effort to draw Volusia County into our annual writing competition.

I was invited by environmental science teacher Cindy Boor to speak to an after-school gathering of several of her students who were interested in participating in our competition. The students had already reviewed the two presentations on our CD, so I focused my efforts on coaching them on how to come up with competitive entries. They were extremely enthusiastic, both for their topics and for the contest, so I am optimistic we will get some strong entries from “north country” for the first time. I’d say “Go, Wolves,” but I can’t, because I have to put on my impartial judge’s hat now.

I am particularly well qualified to judge competently and impartially, based on my extensive experience with soccer referees who don’t.

PATRIOTS PLAN TO FLOOD WINNERS’ CIRCLE THIS YEAR BY DAN JONES



Visiting Dr. Suzy Behel’s writing class at Lake Brantley High has become pretty much of an annual event for me. This year’s visit



went very well. We began with the multimedia overview of the writing competition (Suzy had plans to show the tutorial on technical communication later when she talks to her students about careers). Then I just talked informally with the students for another 30 minutes or so, further motivating them to submit their work (Suzy had already done a good job here) and answering a variety of questions from both Suzy and the students.

Questions included what types of audiences the students should write to, what topics they should write on, how many graphics they should include, whether they should write in the first person, and how best to review and edit each other’s draft papers. The questions went on and on. Suzy has a great group of students this year, and they are now motivated to take back the lead in competition winners from the other high schools. **MtM**

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Season's greetings, fellow society members. With the new year almost upon us, many of us are no doubt thinking of our New Year's resolutions. While some of you might resolve to lose weight, become more organized, or quit some bad habit or another, you should also add "become more involved in your local STC chapter" to the list. Active membership not only yields benefits to the chapter but to you as well. Through active membership you gain a wide network of supportive peers and valuable experiences that can be applied to your career.

As always, I welcome your feedback and opinions, so feel free to email me at ecoto72@yahoo.com.

Thanks for reading and have a safe and happy holiday season,
Erika

YOUR OPINION COUNTS



Thanks to everyone who filled out a meeting survey for November's meeting on Effective Editing/Writing for Online vs. Print Media. Check out the results:

- ✓ **Overall Topic Rating:**
 - Excellent - 12
 - Satisfactory - 8
 - Did not meet expectations - 0
- ✓ **Overall Speaker Rating:**
 - Excellent - 13
 - Satisfactory - 7
 - Did not meet expectations - 0
- ✓ **Visitor Comments:**
 - "Karla did a great job of tying everything together into a smooth, easy-to-understand flow."
 - "Would like to hear more about where editing fits into particular job titles/tasks."
 - "Excellent information. Really like the panel format presentation."

Remember to fill out a comment card at every chapter meeting you attend. We value and listen to your comments; they guide our efforts towards making each monthly program worthwhile. **MtM**



Mark Your Calendars!

- ✓ **December 16th: Chapter meeting - Tour of Triangle Reprographics/Social Gathering**
- ✓ **January 13th, 2004: Joint Meeting with UCF/Jaffe Award**

UCF STUDENTS:

DON'T MISS THE JANUARY ORLANDO CHAPTER STC STUDENT MEMBERSHIP DRIVE!

- ★ All existing student members who have renewed their STC membership will receive two \$5 meeting coupons.*
- ★ All students who sign up for first-time membership will receive a \$15 discount on the already low \$56 student membership fee.**

*Renewal must be verified before coupons are given. Coupons will be distributed at chapter meetings.

**You must sign up by 01/31/04 to take advantage of this offer.

CALL FOR JUDGES

FTC and STC members are needed as judges in the 7th annual Internet Science and Technology Fair (ISTF), an on-line competition for students in grades 3 - 12 in which students innovate technical solutions to real-world problems.

Schedule:

FTC members are needed for the preliminary round of judging between 3/19/04 and 3/26/04.

STC members are needed for the final round of judging between 4/16/04 and 4/25/04.

To serve as a judge, you will need only a computer with Internet access. The forms for judging, the students' projects, and the guidelines for the three grade groupings are available online. You can complete the evaluations any time within the review period.

If you (or a qualified professional or student you know) are able to devote approximately two to three hours of your time, please send your response including the names and e-mail addresses of interested individuals to director@istf.ucf.edu.