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.

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 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.

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

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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?

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.

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

(Continued on page 3)
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.

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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).

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.

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

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.
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

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.

Memorandum to Members
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 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 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 vapidly 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 antionomatopoieical properties.

**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?

**ANSWER:** The word **queue** is the only legitimate word in the English language with 5 consecutive vowels: “queueing.” Consider that little nugget your Christmas present from Word Mint! But be warned: if you use “queueing” without a space, as in “I’m queueing for the bus” or “I’m queueing for the bus,” you will lose all of the benefit of this linguistic gem. Instead of “queueing,” use “queueing” (or “queueing”). As you can see, when you change the one word from regular to queueing, you have the option of making a long (4) or a short (3) word, depending upon what kind of sentence you want to form.

**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.

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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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:
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.
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.

![Lavasoft Ad-aware 5.83
Sections to scan: My Computer Scan Memory
Scan Registry
Quick Scan
Deep Scan
Scan Drives
A (Removable)
C (Fixed)
D (Fixed)
E (Fixed)

Detected components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>System</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>HotBar</td>
<td>C:\Program Files\HotBar</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>HotBar</td>
<td>C:\Program Files\HotBar\hotbar.log</td>
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Figure 2: The Ad-aware interface

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6. 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.

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

7. 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.
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!

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.

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 Zyngula 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 point 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.

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.
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.

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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.

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.

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 county” 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.

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.
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

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.