MEMO TO MEMBERS

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

Winner of STC's Chapter of Distinction Award, 2003 and 2004

Tuesday, January 25th at 6:30 PM

The Current State of Digital Asset Management

By Melody Bowden, Assistant Professor, UCF

On behalf of the UCF English Department's Technical Writing Faculty, we are pleased to invite you to attend the annual UCF-hosted chapter meeting, which will take place on Tuesday, January 25, from 6:30 PM to 9 PM in the Cape Florida Room (319) of UCF's Student Union. Our faculty and students value our connection with the chapter deeply, and we look forward to showing all of you some hospitality each year at this event.

Our speaker this year is Ian Gibson, Ph.D. Formerly an electrical engineer in the fields of microcomputer communication devices and displays, then an inventor and researcher in the field of digital libraries for medical informatics, Dr. Gibson is now a faculty member in the School of Film and Digital Media at the University of Central Florida. Dr. Gibson has a special involvement with Digital Asset Management and Enterprise Information Portal configurations and is engaged in exciting work with emerging multimedia communication technologies.

Special offer for UCF students click here for more info!

During our meeting Dr. Gibson will define and outline the current state of the Digital Asset Management (DAM) industry in general and describe the ways in which UCF Digital Media is beginning to use this technology in conjunction with two industry partners. He will provide participants with ideas about ways in which awareness of this cutting edge aspect of communication studies can be of help to them in terms of workflow and information management. This presentation will allow you to see some new ways in which UCF is partnering with local industries to develop new technologies and to learn about some exciting possible uses for these ideas within your own fields.

We look forward to having you on campus with us and to an engaging presentation followed by lively discussion. For a map of the UCF campus, please go to http://campusmap.ucf.edu/. You can park for a small fee at any of our campus garages and in any of our many student lots, which are identified on the map. For more information about this event, please contact Melody Bowdon (mbowdon@mail.ucf.edu) or Mary Ellen Gomrad (mgomrad@mail.ucf.edu). *MtM*
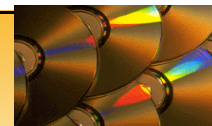
Join Us!
Tuesday, Jan. 25th, 6:30 PM
UCF Student Union
Admission: $5.00 (cash or check only)
RSVP by January 24th, 2005 to
vicepresident@stc-orlando.org

Don't Miss Our Third Jaffe Award Presentation!

By W.C. Wiese

A new month. A new year. But don't worry. We'll be surrounded in some very valued traditions to make you feel right at home during the next meeting of the Orlando Chapter.

In 2001, the Orlando Chapter renewed its commitment to partnering with the Technical Writing program at the University of Central Florida by offering to fund a joint program that featured a distinguished speaker in technical communication. This cooperation is now in its fourth year and features Dr. Ian Gibson, Visiting Assistant Professor at the UCF School of Digital Media. This meeting – please note – will be held at the Student Union on the UCF campus.

We added a new wrinkle in 2003 with our

Support the Orlando Chapter!

When you renew your STC membership this year you will notice several new options. It is very important that you choose to maintain your membership in the **Orlando Chapter** so we can continue to provide the meetings, employment resources, and other services that we all enjoy. Please refer to this "Sample Ballot" when renewing your membership.

☑ Membership Information: Select either "Classic" or "Electronic" Membership.

Membership Type: Classic ▼
- Classic
- Electronic
- Limited

☑ Geographic-Based Communities: Select Orlando!

Geographic-Based Communities:
Chapter - Location (sorted by location)
Orlando - Orlando, FL
===
Australia - Australia, Sydney
TransAlpine - Austria, Vienna
Belgium - Belgium, Mechelen

Don't Miss, *continued*

first Gloria Jaffe Outstanding Technical Communicator Awards. Now in our third contest year, we are honored that Professor Gloria Jaffe will participate in the awards presentation. Now retired, she made valuable contributions to STC and UCF during her career, and we are pleased to honor her by presenting the Jaffe Awards in the presence of both communities. Her leadership is reflected in the enduring communication values prized by the Orlando Chapter and in the professionalism of UCF graduates that is a tradition of the Technical Writing program.

Jaffe Competition Manager Gail Lippincott and judges Karen Lane and Richard Phipps received nominations in November and again had a tough challenge in identifying the area's outstanding communicator for the past year. We hope you will be on hand when the announcement is made.

Last year's winner was Kelli Pharo, who works at PBS&J in Orlando. The award recognized Pharo's achievement as a technical communicator and recognized PBS&J as the Central Florida business that most significantly benefited through the professional involvement of its technical communicators.

This night of special awards is an opportunity for us to recognize achievement in our chosen profession at the academic level and at the professional level. It's also a chance to meet the winners and learn from them about things you can do to make your career more effective and satisfying. Plan to join us! *MtM*

Tech Writer Spotlight: Erin Witkowski

By Christina Hammock, Vice President STC Orlando Chapter

The technical communicators of the Orlando Chapter STC have wide varieties of specialties, skills, and careers. This new column will introduce us to a different member every month and answer some questions about his or her job and industry.

Erin Witkowski is a technical proposal writer with Priority Healthcare. She has worked as a technical writer for three years and has been with Priority Healthcare for one and a half years. She earned her BA in English-Technical Writing from UCF in 2002. Erin has been an STC member for two and a half years.

Q. Can you provide a brief summary of your position?

I am the resource to the sales force: before the sale, writing the presentations for the sales directors to deliver, then answering the resulting RFP (request for proposal), then preparing the finalist and site visit presentations for executive management to deliver, answering any follow up requests from the client prior to signing a contract.

Then, following the contracting phase, I am involved in writing communications materials for their clients (patients and physicians) to effectively market the product they have purchased from us. Later in the relationship, I support the sales directors and account managers with communicating clinical and operational savings opportunities at quarterly meetings. Many times these meetings require a "state of the union" type of paper that describes where they are and where opportunities for enhancing their program exist.

Q. What kind of documentation do you write?

I write proposals, presentations, white papers, external communications copy (e.g.; brochures, letters, FAQs), fact sheets, booklets, and Web copy.

Q. What software do you use?

I use Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Visio, PhotoShop, Adobe Professional, and Microsoft Project.

Q. Who do you report to? Who do you have to interact with in developing products (Engineers, HR, etc.)?

I report to the Senior Vice President of Managed Care Sales & Government Programs. I typically interact with senior management—clinical, operations, IT, payor implementation, account management, customer service, finance, etc.

Q. Does Priority Healthcare employ other technical writers?

I am the only technical writer in the company (a company of over 1400 employees). I do have support personnel available to aid with the copious amount of work; however, I am ultimately responsible for the end product.

Q. What do you feel is unique about being a technical writer in your industry?

Well, for one thing, they had posted my job for about a year before I put my resume on Monster—and they contacted me immediately. That says that there are not too many tech writers with healthcare experience in the marketplace. I think that before a company (other than the old standbys like the IT or military-based industries that have long recognized the need for TWs) hires a tech writer, they don't realize how much they need someone with this kind of background and expertise. Now, I know that my place here at the company is recognized as invaluable. In fact, we are going to expand the department within the next year to include

Want to be featured in the next "Tech Writer Spotlight"?

Always dreamed of your fifteen minutes of fame? Want to impress your office mates, your boss, your family or friends? Is there an empty space on your mantle just waiting for a framed feature of you in *MtM*? Simply send an e-mail to newsletter@stc-orlando.org and you could be our next spotlight subject.

Tool Tips: Dual Monitors
By David Coverston, Chapter Secretary

A few months ago I began using a dual-monitor setup on my office PC. I asked for this setup because I was using FrameMaker in structured mode and the floating palettes obscured the documents I was working on. I could have addressed this problem by using a bigger monitor and stashing all the floating windows off to one side, but I tried this using a 19" CRT monitor, and it was still a bit difficult. If you have tried both, I think you will agree that the dual monitor setup works better.

In order to use two monitors, you have to have an operating system that supports it, such as Windows 98 or later, and a video card that supports two monitors. I understand that you can install two PCI slot video cards and get the dual monitors to work, but I haven't tried it.

My setup is Windows 2000 with a Geforce 5200 F/X video card. With the Dell Optiplex I am using, both monitors have to be plugged into the video card and the onboard video must be disabled. Quite honestly, it was difficult getting it set up, but I am fortunate to have great technical support people at my job, and they helped me get it up and running.

One of the first things I noticed about the dual-monitor setup was that the second monitor did not have a taskbar. I use my taskbar a lot because I usually have four or more applications running at one time and the taskbar allows me to switch between running applications.

Roman Voska, aka Oscar, offers us a choice of taskbar or no taskbar on our second (or third) monitor. If you visit his Web site, http://www.mediachance.com, you can download Oscar's Multi-Monitor TaskBar. Like most of the tools I have presented to you, this one is also free. Just download the ~500 KB executable and run it. The software installs and starts working right away.

The Oscar web site says that in order to use his software, the secondary monitor must be on the right and the monitors must have the same resolution. Also, the Oscar application does not work with Windows 95, 98, or ME. If you are using three monitors, the primary monitor must be the one in the middle. Since none of these limitations applied to me, I installed the program and was running in a couple of minutes.

The Oscar application is simple and I love it. The applications you have running on the second monitor only show up on that monitor. I like to display Acrobat files on my second monitor and FrameMaker files that I am comparing them with on my first monitor. The Acrobat icon displays only on the second monitor's taskbar. I like having the time show on that monitor, too.

TaskBar adds a "Move to Monitor" button to your applications as shown below in Figure 1. Just click the button and your application moves to the other monitor. If you have three monitors, then TaskBar adds two buttons to your application's titlebars.
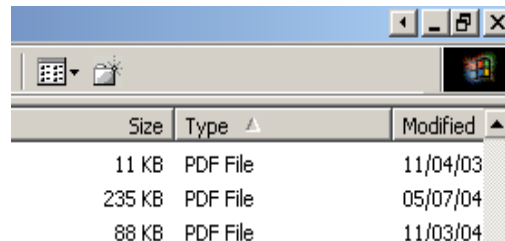

Figure 1: Windows Explorer with the Move to Monitor button

A second feature of the TaskBar is the Text Clipboard Extender on the TaskBar, shown below in Figure 2. The
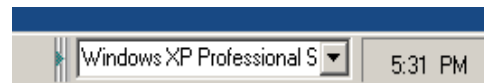

Figure 2: The Text Clipboard Extender

Extender captures and stores the last 100 text copy operations and lets you select any of the text entries and paste them into a document. Simply click the drop-down arrow, and double-click an entry to paste it into a document. When you right-click the TaskBar, a pop-up menu displays (Figure 3) with three choices: Properties, Shut Down Windows, and Unload Toolbar. Choosing Properties brings up the Properties sheet (Figure 4) where you can set your options. Choosing Un-Load Toolbar removes the TaskBar from the second monitor. You can unload it and reload it without having to restart the computer. The Shut Down Windows command did not do anything on my PC, but that is a small bug I can live with.
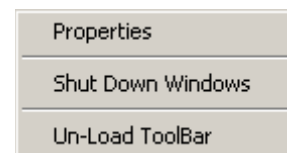

Figure 3: The Taskbar pop-up menu

The Auto Hide checkbox performs the same auto hide function as is available on your regular taskbar. The Insert

Tool Tips, continued

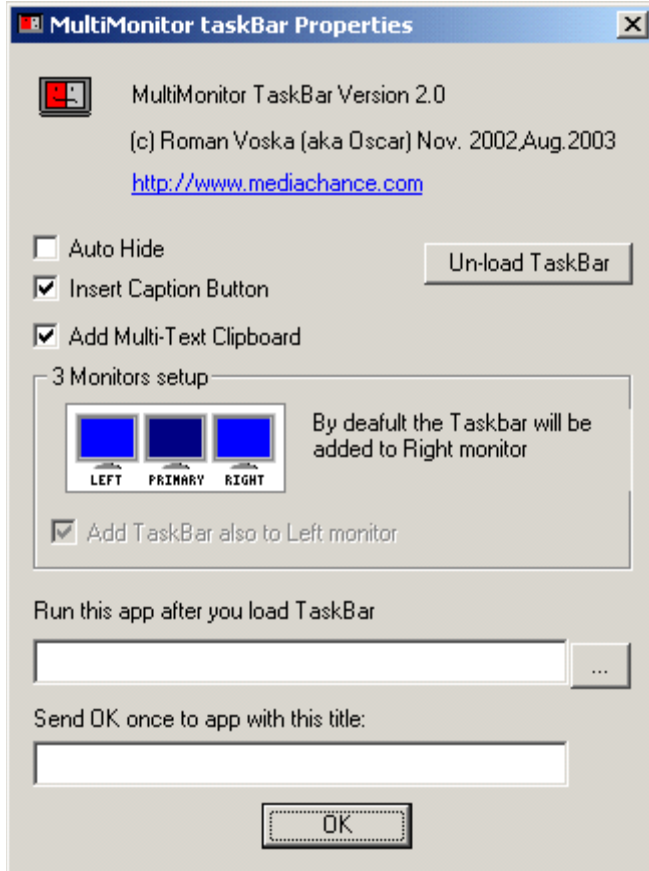*(Continued from page 4)*

Figure 4: The Taskbar properties sheet

Caption Button checkbox lets you displays or hide the Move to Monitor buttons on your applications. The Add Multi-Text Clipboard option displays or hides the Text Clipboard Extender on the Taskbar. Be sure to read Oscar's Web pages for more information on how to use this great tool. He has a number of other applications you may want to check out also. *MtM*

If You Missed Our Last Meeting. . .

By Mark Wray, Membership Committee Manager

If you missed the December meeting, then you missed a dynamic presentation by one of STC-Orlando's favorite guest speakers, Patrick Koster. Patrick is President of Koster Associates, which provides customized Adobe training solutions nationwide, and as he has amply demonstrated in previous visits, he incorporates a wealth of valuable information about Adobe products into every presentation. Incidentally, there is no truth to the rumor that Patrick's popularity as a speaker stems from his habit of giving away a copy of Acrobat Professional as a door prize at every meeting.

At December's meeting, Patrick previewed Adobe Acrobat Professional version 7.0. Although version 7.0 has been launched, it was not yet shipping at the time of December's meeting. Patrick advised Orlando chapter members that version 7.0 will allow the creation of profiles that will enable or disable certain functionality, thereby allowing users great flexibility in the way their PDF documents are delivered, read, and stored. Version 7.0 will also provide enhanced functionality in the free Adobe Reader, which will allow recipients of PDF documents to add and save comments, and will permit users to save information they have entered on forms. After previewing version 7.0, Patrick then proceeded with a detailed dissection of Acrobat Professional version 6.0. Among other things, we learned that version 6.0:

- allows users considerable editing capability through the use of the Select Text tool
- provides the Layers tab as a convenient way to add or delete information
- contains dynamic Zoom and Loupe tools
- is particularly well-suited for forms development work
- easily creates bookmarks for all kinds of documents

Patrick demonstrated an expedited process to simplify the electronic review of a document, and showed an example in which a Web-based review process allows simultaneous, real-time review of documents by multiple reviewers. Cool stuff.

In other happenings at December's meeting, Dr. Melody Bowden, Assistant Professor of English at the University of Central Florida introduced her guest Dr. Ian Gibson. Dr. Gibson is a Visiting Assistant Professor in UCF's Division of Digital Media, and will be the guest speaker at the January meeting of STC to be held at UCF on January 25th. Jen Selix, President of Future Technical Communicators (FTC), a student-run organization at UCF, outlined plans for the upcoming spring series of free workshops FTC offers each month at UCF's Technical Writing lab. WC Wiese delivered an update on the judging for the Gloria Jaffe Technical Communication Excellence Award, and crowed about the strong meeting attendance the Orlando chapter has experienced

Spreading the Word: 2005 High School Writing Competition
By Gail Lippincott, Education Committee Manager

Orlando chapter members returned to school last fall – high school, that is.

To promote the Ninth Annual Central Florida High School Technical Writing Competition, seven members challenged high school students to think about technical communication as a career. These enthusiastic speakers used chapter-created presentations and handouts, as well as items from their own portfolios, to show students the exciting range of communication products that we create.

First-Timer Falcons Fly into the Competition
Barbara Odom kicked off the promotion. In early October, she met Ed Santsaver's students at the Advanced Technology Center (ATC) of Daytona Beach Community College. Barbara was pleased with her session, calling the ATC "a gorgeous school, a combination of a charter school for high school kids and a vocational technical institute for post-high school."

Ed, as you remember from earlier *MtM* articles, struggled to keep his classes going after three hurricane-force disruptions. Chapter members pitched in with donated books to replace those Ed lost in the storms. Our efforts clearly touched Ed and his students. When Jen Selix and Gail Lippincott spoke to two of Ed's classes in mid-December, these advanced placement high school students were turning in their nicely illustrated technical reports. Jen and Gail explained the Competition's guidelines and encouraged students to revise their papers after Mr. Santsaver graded them. With a January 15 deadline, students have time to create top-notch entries.

Patriots Prepare for Clean Sweep
Competition chair Jon Kessler is a veteran presenter who usually covers Winter Springs High School. The hurricanes, however, disrupted all kinds of schedules, and Jon instead spoke to Dr. Suzy Behel's classes at Lake Brantley High School where Dan Jones usually presents. Jon invited Gail Lippincott to come along, and their presentation was fun and interactive. Students were very interested in the Competition guidelines, asking lots of questions about how to incorporate graphics and formatting. Look out for another bumper crop of excellent papers from Winter Springs!

New Challengers: Crooms Panthers Wired for Success
The on-the-job training with Jon encouraged Gail to speak to three classes at Crooms Academy of Information Technology in Sanford. This new magnet school for Seminole County provides its students with laptops and wired classrooms, letting Gail show students the chapter Web site, competition guidelines, and samples of papers and good entry forms. Most students had never heard of technical communication, and no one had thought about any audience other than the teacher for their required reports. Faces lit up when Gail asked how a "simple" explanation by one student of how to send a text message on the cell phone would need to be revised for someone who had never used a cell phone. This ability to understand the needs of different audiences underscored the value of technical communication in any job. We look forward to cultivating a strong relationship with Crooms teachers and students and many excellent entries for this year's Competition.

Returning Panthers Break in New Speaker
Several other chapter members wanted to know how to conduct these high school presentations, so Jon held an informal teach-in after the October chapter meeting. Pumped up by this guidance, Allison Johnson took on Dr. Phillips High School, taking over Mike Murray's usual venue. Allison looked over the materials Jon and Mike had given her, prepared an outline, and consulted with her contact, teacher Mary Ann Revel. Allison described her successful presentation to four senior English classes:

"I enjoyed getting off at 2:15 after a 'full day' of work. I enjoyed taking a vacation day from my real job to do the presentations. I very much enjoyed going through my portfolio and talking about my experiences because it reminded me what a full and rich life I've had as a technical communicator. I also enjoyed encouraging these students to enter the contest (they had already done their research papers, so it was really just convincing them to send in the papers). I wasn't sure when I left how many (if any) students would enter, but I did have a good feeling that at least they heard something about the field and a potential career they may not have realized was out there."

Blue Darters Armed for Victory
The Dynamic Duo of Bonnie Spivey and Dan Voss enjoyed another successful visit to Apopka High School's advanced senior engineering students. Dan explained that "the science teacher, Ken Bowles, made it clear to the class that this was an assignment for a grade. And English teacher Melissa Reicker, an STC member with 10 years of experience as a tech writer, has agreed to review the assignments for syntax, grammar, and mechanics (Ken will review them for content expertise). Melissa attended our session and jumped right in

Spreading the Word, continued

as we were giving the students tips for their assignments."

Dan commented, "The class was very bright and enthusiastic. One kid scored 1540 on his SATs and is working on theoretical physics. He is presently choosing between MIT and Cal Tech." The Dynamic Duo brought documents from their workplace to wow the students. The all-male student audience "liked the missiles and bombs exploding in the Lockheed Martin multimedia materials, but they were also intrigued with Bonnie's materials on documentation for WDW Cruiselines."

In typical Vossian style, Dan issued a challenge: "All things considered, we are confident that Apopka will not only maintain but expand the beach-head Christian Blackwelder gave them in the winners' circle last year. Stand warned, Winter Springs and Lake Brantley. The Blue Darters are on the march!" *MtM*

If You Missed, continued

so far this year; monthly chapter meeting attendance is up 40% this year. Bonnie Spivey, Public Relations committee chair, wrapped up our first annual "Orlando Can" canned food drive, proclaiming it a great success with over 3 carloads of food delivered to the Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida. Special thanks to everyone who contributed canned goods for the benefit of the larger, Central Florida community.

See you at the next meeting. *MtM*

Letter to the Editor:

Karen Lane passes on some helpful membership renewal information.

There's a place on both the printed and online membership forms (STC) where you can specify as many chapters as you want.

Interestingly (and I know you already know this), the difference between e-membership (electronic publications) and limited membership (no communities and no possibility to purchase communities) is only $10.

This year I signed up for classic membership—1 chapter and 4 SIGs. In the past I belonged only to 3 SIGs. I added Usability this year (and retained AccessAbility, Tech Editing, Indexing). These are great bargains for $5 each. I belong to AccessAbility for the good work it does (even though I'm not personally active in that group), Tech Editing for its fine newsletter and online discussion list, Indexing for its newsletter and online discussion list [and because I know so many colleagues there], and I expect Usability will teach me a lot about a subject I know a little about but would like to know more. All for $5 each. I can't believe what a great benefit this is -- and has always been.

Karen Lane

BE MY VALENTINE!

Valentine's Day is just around the corner. Why not get something special for that special someone by using our Amazon.com click through? You'll find sweets for your sweet and roses for your rosebud all while supporting your Orlando Chapter STC. Now what could be sweeter than that?

amazon.com.
EARTH'S BIGGEST SELECTION!
shop here

Membership Renewal Now in Progress

Renew Your Membership Today!
By Mark Wray, Membership Committee Manager

Happy Renewal Year!

That's right, it's time to renew your STC membership. You've just spent a load of cash over the holidays on gifts for others, now it's time to treat yourself! Renewal of your membership is quick, easy, and more valuable than gold, frankincense, and myrrh.
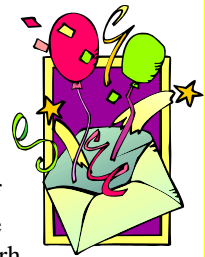
Simply log in at http://www.stc.org/, click on the Renew Dues button, sign in, and after several easy steps, voila, you're a part of the holly-jolliest chapter around for another year! Don't forget, when you get to step 7, indicate that you want to be part of the Orlando chapter!

Make it your new year's resolution to renew today! *MtM*

Society News

CONSUMER REPORTS MONEY ADVISER CALLS TECHNICAL WRITING A "BRILLIANT CAREER"
Consumer Reports Money Adviser newsletter included an article in its September 2004 issue titled "Your brilliant (second) career." The article is aimed at those who have reached middle age (or beyond) and are considering a career change.

Included in the list of careers was that of technical writer. The text mentions STC and lists statistics from the Society's annual salary survey. For those interested in technical writing careers, *Money Adviser* says "...you should be a clear, concise writer with some background in the industry in which you plan to work."

U.S. MEMBERS: DEDUCT YOUR STC DUES!
If you pay taxes in the United States, keep in mind that STC dues are tax deductible. Please note, however, that *dues must be deducted from the tax return filed for the year in which they were paid*. In other words, dues paid in 2004 may be deducted only from 2004 tax returns. Members who have questions should contact their local IRS office or their accountant. *MtM*
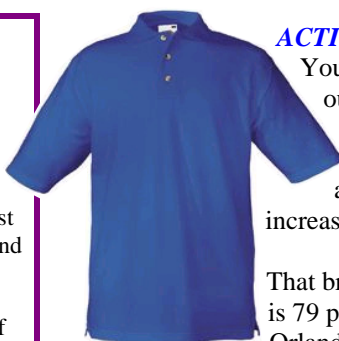
FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Happy New Year, everyone. According to the Chinese calendar, 2005 is the year of the rooster and 2004 *was* the year of the monkey. So, I suggest that we all quit monkeying around and make 2005 one of the best years in our chapter's history. How do we do that? For starters, be sure to renew your membership with the Orlando Chapter of STC. Then, GET INVOLVED with your chapter by attending meetings, writing articles for *MtM*, working on a committee, etc. Before you know it, you will be earning points towards an active membership shirt.

As always, I welcome your feedback and opinions, so feel free to e-mail me at newsletter@stc-orlando.org.

Thanks for reading,
Erika

YOUR OPINION COUNTS

Remember to let a chapter leader (red badge) know if you have any ideas for ways we can make chapter meetings even more valuable to you. *MtM*

Now available at our chapter meetings—the one-of-a-kind Orlando Chapter lapel pins.
Only $5^{00} Each
Buy *Your* Lapel Pin at the next meeting!

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP CORNER

Your chapter remains on a roll with an outstanding turnout for the December meeting. With 37 members and guests attending, the meeting set a record for the month (18 to 28 attended during the past 3 years). This year's increase is more than twice last year's attendance!

That brings year-to-date participation to 175, which is 79 percent larger than last year's total. Thus far, 61 Orlando Chapter members have earned points.

Current active membership points leaders are:

★ Erika Coto
★ David Coverston
★ Alex Garcia
★ Mark Hanigan
★ Christina Hammock
★ Robin Horn
★ Allison Johnson
★ Jon Kessler
★ Karen Lane
★ Gail Lippincott
★ Laurel Moll

★ Sara Morris
★ Mike Murray
★ Rosalie Petralia
★ Kelli Pharo
★ Richard Phipps
★ Jennifer Selix
★ Bonnie Spivey
★ Daniel Voss
★ William Wiese
★ Mark Wray

Mark Your Calendars!

- January 25th - **Joint UCF-Orlando STC Chapter Meeting at UCF, 6:30 PM**
- January 26, 2005 - **A Pound of Salt, A Pint of Blood - Getting the Most Out of Your Contractors to Ensure Project Success** (Web-Telephone)
- February 2, 2005 - **Low-Tech Analysis of Sentence Structure: The Sentence Diagram** (Web-Telephone)
- February 6, 2005 - SUPERBOWL SUNDAY
- February 9, 2005 - **Adobe Acrobat 7.0** (Web-Telephone), **Admin Council Meeting, 6:30 PM**
- February 14, 2005 - St. Valentine's Day
- February 16, 2005 - **Global Diversity: Increasing Cross-Cultural Communication Awareness** (Web-Telephone)