SOCIETY FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION
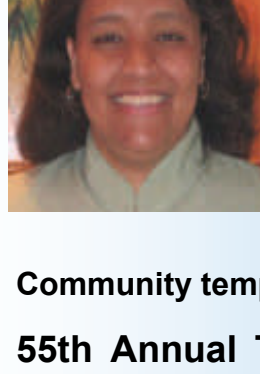
Orlando Chapter

STC

March 2008

Memo to Members

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

March Madness
by Erika Higgins, Orlando Chapter President

Community Achievement Award: The deadline for members to submit Community Achievement items is coming up on March 31st. If you have any items that might help your Orlando Chapter maintain its Excellence status or reclaim its Distinction status, please send these items to me by March 31st. For details on what sort of items we are looking for, visit: **http://www.stc.org/recog/award01_comAchievement.asp** and view the Geographic Community template.

55th Annual Technical Summit: Time is running out to take advantage of "early bird" rates for the 55th Annual Conference. You can save up to $200 if you register by March 17th. This year's conference will be held in the exciting city of Philadelphia, PA and promises to be one of the best yet. You don't want to miss your chance to be a part of it. "The Technical Communication Summit is the primary source of learning and expanding your knowledge about technical communication. Over 3 ½ days, the summit certificate programs, education sessions, keynote speakers and networking opportunities make the Summit the place you should be. Whether you're a novice or a senior practitioner, manager or researcher, the Summit caters to your need for education and professional growth!" Register today!

Chapter Renewal Challenge: RENEW YOUR REGISTRATION TODAY! The Renewal Challenge rewards chapters that achieve the highest member renewal rates. Chapters compete with other chapters of similar size and resources. The chapter in each size category with the highest renewal rate on March 31st will receive four complimentary full meeting registrations for the Philadelphia conference. Such a good reason to renew? Take a look at these reasons submitted by Clyde Parson, President, Suncoast STC:

- *Social interaction* – I used to believe that I preferred the warm glow of a computer monitor but in recent years I've found that I would much rather talk to someone face-to-face (never mind the fact that LCD monitors just aren't as cozy to snuggle up with as CRT's once were!)
- *Status associated with membership* – Several employers during my employment search, including the one that I ultimately selected, seemed quite impressed with the fact that I was a member and the chapter president. I think this speaks to one's personal commitment to his or her chosen profession. It says that I view this as a career rather than just another job.
- *Sense of belonging* – As a "lone writer," it's nice to know that there are others who share the same concerns and issues even if they happen to work for a different employer. Career related networking opportunities – I've long held the belief that the sales function is significantly influenced by how good the salesperson is at building a relationship with a prospective client. In much the same manner, the hiring process can be significantly eased by the establishment of relationships outside the interview.
- *Working toward a common goal* – In my Orlando Chapter leadership position, I've been able to experience the synergy that can take place when multiple people are all pulling in the same direction to accomplish the same goals.
- *Opportunities to express my creativity* – I tend to think in "big picture" terms but since I'm not running my own business I don't always have an outlet for my ideas. Serving in a leadership position with our chapter has provided numerous opportunities to let my creative juices flow.

If You Missed Our Last Meeting…
by Ashley Carney, Orlando Chapter Education Committee Manager
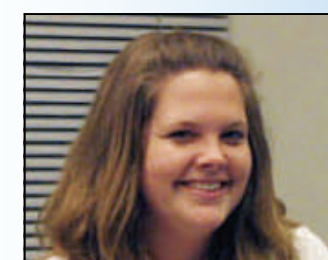
…you missed an interactive presentation of ethics, opinions and so much more.

Max Croft, a Visual Language professor from UCF's Digital Media program gave us a mind-stretching look into the obligations and responsibilities of content authors. With a lead question like "Would you sell beer to a 10-year-old?", the discussion topics branched out in all different directions, and united/divided the STC group by the professionals. Croft did more than just intrigue and inspire with his own personal story of his career path and his own idea of letting the "image of magnificence drive you career," a motto to which many a tech communicator can relate. Lest we forget amidst the topical debates of the evening, members were treated to snippets from actual STC Digital Media student animated films to truly experience the message of Croft's twin "understanding the technical specifications" and "the language of what you can see and feel." Max Croft brought spice to the night with his bold scenarios, and his presentation was well received, to say the least.

Other Highlights and Announcements From the Meeting…
- *Member Incentive Drive* – Intergalactic is offering a prize of four free admissions to the 55th Annual Technical Summit in Philadelphia as incentive for membership renewal. Renew your membership today and bring Orlando Chapter STC one step closer to earning four free conference admissions to be raffled off. You could be one of the lucky four to win a free conference admission!
- *Newest Mentor/Mentee Pair* – Gail Lippincott announced the most recently matched mentor/mentee pair, Dalton Hooper and Rachel Eichen. Congratulations to the newest M&M duo!
- *Intergalactic Service Honors* – Peggy Bivins was formally recognized by Intergalactic for her service and commitment as a student member of the Orlando Chapter STC with a certificate. A plaque will also be engraved with her name so that she may display her acknowledgements from the Society. Congratulations, Peggy!

Active Membership Corner
by W.C. Wiese, Orlando Chapter Active Member Manager

Around the far turn and heading for home – there are just 3 months left to capture an Orlando Chapter active member shirt for 2008!

We've already awarded 262 active member points to 45 different members. Does that include you?

Monthly meeting attendance, buoyed by good turnouts at UCF in January and at the Civic Center in February, has pushed average attendance back to last year's levels. Be sure to attend the next meeting and join your fellow new members.

Now, about those shirts that the most active among you are earning…

A total of 16 points is required to earn an active membership shirt at our awards celebration next June. Erika Higgins, Gail Lippincott, Cindy Skawinski, and Alex Garcia have already locked theirs up. The top 20 are listed below. Are you there yet?

1. Higgins	2. Lippincott	3. Skawinski	4. Garcia	5. Pharo
6. Wray	7. Kessler	8. Lane	9. Wiese	10. Coverston
11. Carney	12. Heath	13. Shydo	14. Beck	15. Johnson

Saving A Website
*by David Coverston, Orlando Chapter Membership Manager*
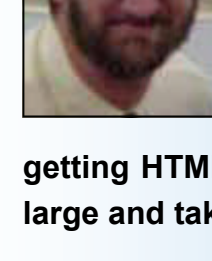
On occasion, I need to save a copy of a web page. I save the page in different formats - .mht, .html, .txt .pdf, or .doc- depending on how I want to use the information later. But when I need to save a number of pages or an entire website, I turn to WinHTTrack.

WinHTTrack, the Windows release of HTTrack (there is also a Linux/Unix/BSD version), is a free offline website browsing utility. As their website explains, "It allows you to download a World Wide Web site from the Internet to a local directory, building recursively all directories, getting HTML, images, and other files from the server to your computer." If the website you want to copy is large and takes a while to copy, WinHTTrack will let you stop and resume the download later.

To get started, go to **http://www.httrack.com** and download the installation file, httrack-3.42.exe is the latest version as of this time. Double-click the file to install it and start the program. You are now ready to copy a website.

Click the **Next** button to start a new project. In the left pane, select the local drive and folder where you wish to copy the website files. Give the project a name. Later if you want to update the website you have copied, you can open your project and update the changed files in it.
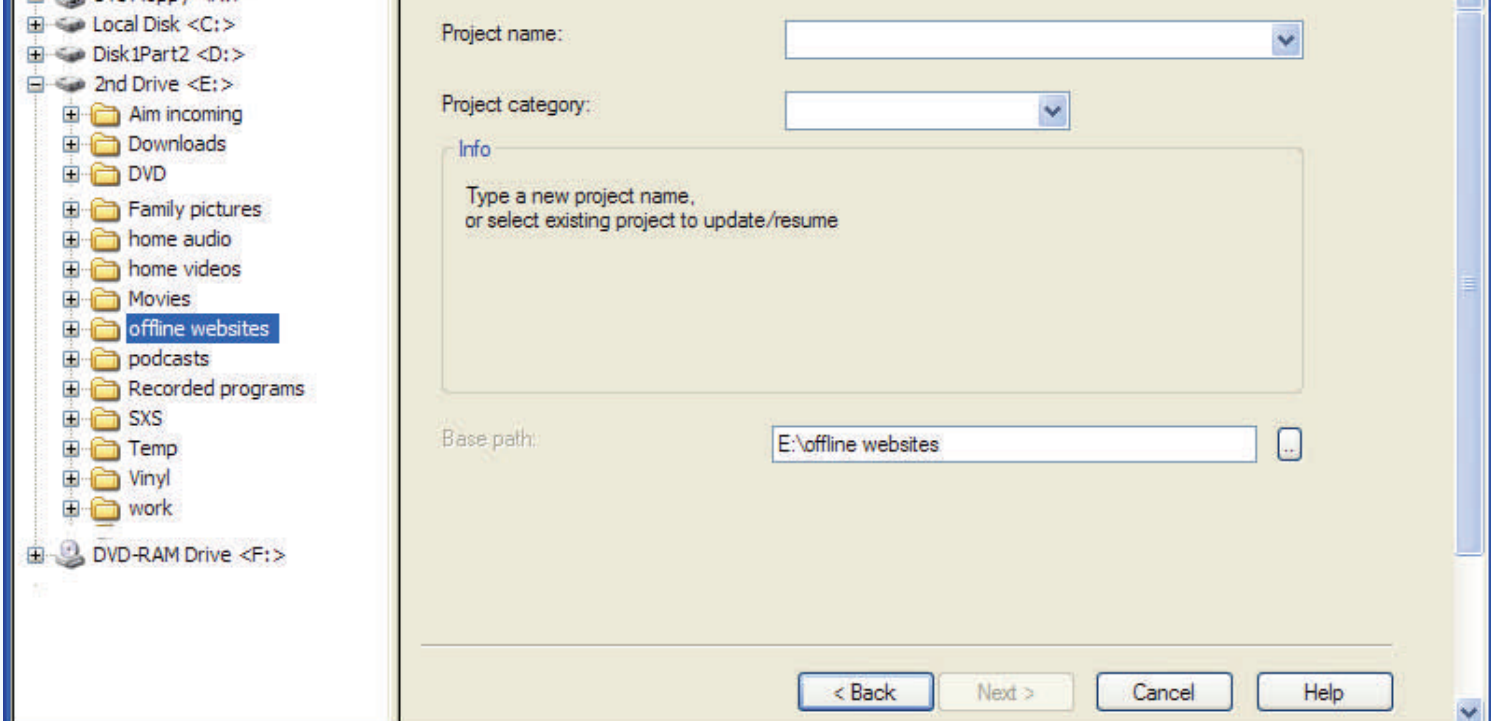
Click **Next** again. Select the action you wish to perform from the Action drop-down list. Choose the **Download web site** option. Enter the website's URL in the Web Addresses text box. If the site you are downloading requires you to login, then click Add URL and enter your information in the provided places. You will want to investigate the Set options button before you begin downloading. This allows you to set important options such as the mirror depth, and limits on file sizes to download. You can use wildcards to include or exclude file types or links.
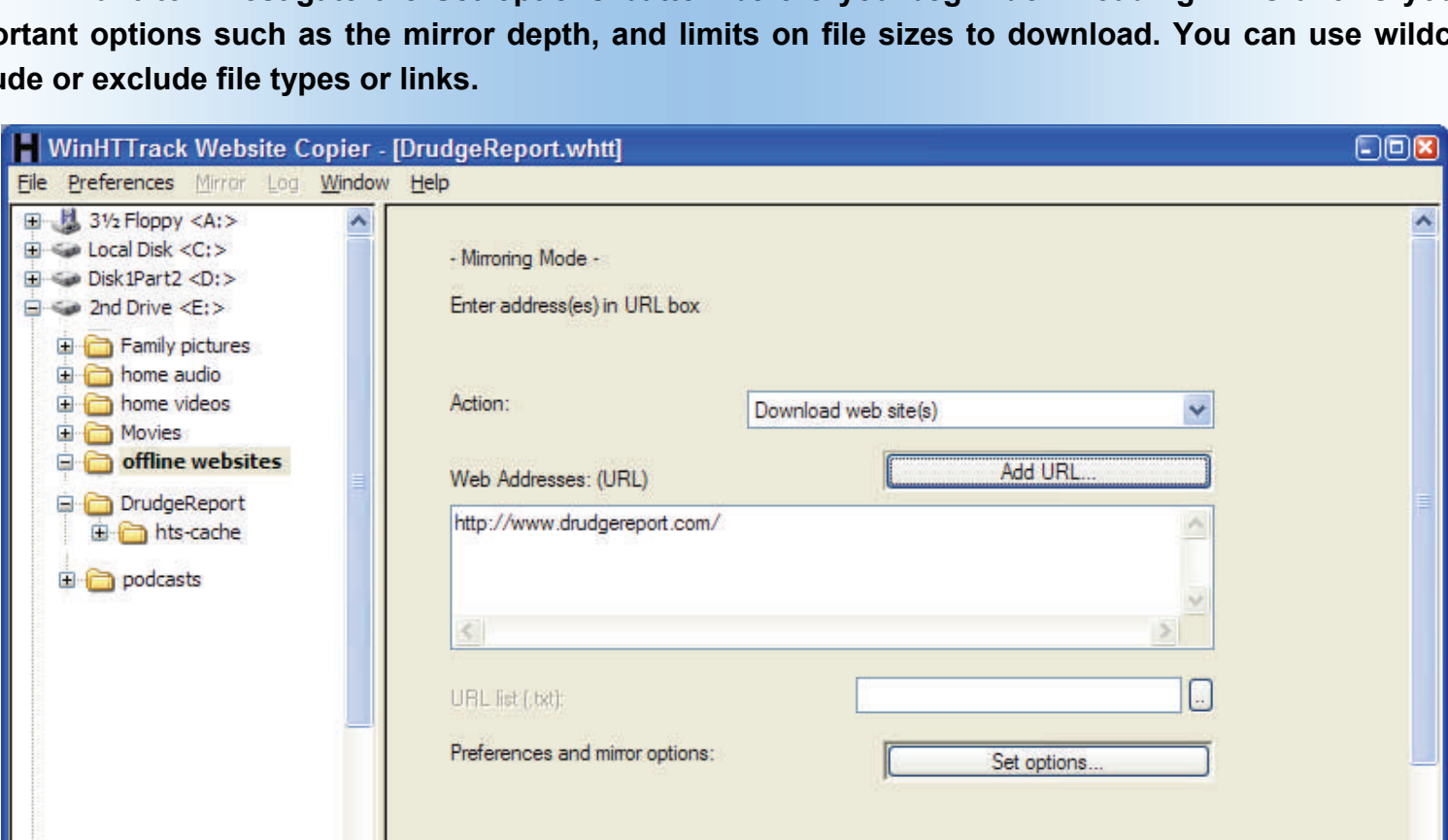
Once you have downloaded a website, the index.html file in the project folder you have created, and begin browsing. The links will work just as they do on the website. Keep in mind that material you copy, and copy very efficiently with this tool, may be copyrighted.

Patent Careers for Technical Writers and Scientific, Engineering, and Medical Specialists: What IS A Patent Agent?
by Steven C. Oppenheimer, Licensed U.S. Patent Agent
And STC Senior Member, DC Chapter

Note: This is the first in a six-part series by Steven C. Oppenheimer.

Let's start by defining both patents and patent agents.

A patent is a legal document which describes a new invention, and in particular characterizes those aspects of the invention which are really "new" or "inventive". A patent has several parts, but the crucial parts are the detailed discussion of the invention (sometimes referred to informally as "the disclosure") and the claims.

The disclosure gives an overall description of the invention, in sufficient detail that someone who is well-versed in the overall field of technology at hand could build the invention based on the disclosure. The claims are a section of the patent which—by means of very specific, structured legal language and conventions—indicate precisely the aspects of the technology that the inventor asserts are original, and which should therefore be protected by law as his or her unique invention.

In the United States, inventors are legally permitted to draft patent applications for their own inventions. Most inventors, however, recognize that drafting an effective patent requires specialized training. As such, they turn to patent attorneys or patent agents to draft their patents for them. Patent attorneys and patent agents are licensed to draft, file, and prosecute patents on behalf of inventors.

"Drafting" a patent application entails gathering necessary information from the inventors and writing up the patent application. Patent "prosecution" entails a kind of legal dance between the patent applicant and the United States Patent and Trademark Office, or USPTO. It is common for the USPTO to initially reject all or most of the claims in a patent application. The claims can be rejected on various legal grounds, but the typical reason is that there is a prior public disclosure, in the form of a prior patent or other publication which the Patent Examiner considers to anticipate the claimed invention. (Sometimes the Patent Examiner argues not that patent application is anticipated by a single existing invention, but rather that the application is "obvious" in light of a combination of existing technologies. These details are not central to our discussion here, so for now we'll just lump it all under "anticipation".)

In other words, Patent Examiners at the USPTO will argue that someone else got there first. The patent applicant or applicants—typically represented by their attorney or agent—may then either amend the patent claims, or present factual arguments that the claims are not actually anticipated by prior inventions. Sometimes the attorney/agent will do a combination of both, amending some claims while trying to argue around other rejections. This dance can go through one or more rounds, and sometimes winds up going through administrative appeals within the USPTO. (It can even go beyond the USPTO, into the court system.)

Both patent agents and patent attorneys are licensed to fully represent inventors in all respects before the USPTO. In other words, from the standpoint of patent prosecution with the USPTO, there is no practical difference between a patent agent and a patent attorney.

The difference is, a patent attorney can also represent an inventor in various legal proceedings which may take place in courts beyond the jurisdiction of the USPTO. In addition, attorneys can advise inventors on contractual issues, licensing issues, and other legal matters which are beyond the strict scope of patent filing and prosecution. Still, there is a lot of work to be done just in the realm of patent filing and prosecution, more than enough to keep a patent agent very busy!

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Pellegrin Scholarship Deadline Extended to March 21st!
*by Ashley Carney, Orlando Chapter Education Committee Manager*
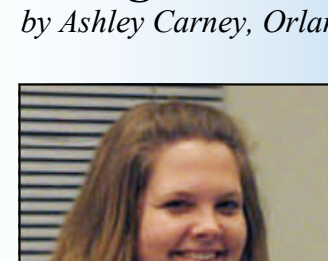
The Education Committee of Orlando Chapter STC has moved the postmark deadline of the Melissa Pellegrin Memorial Scholarship to March 21st, 2008. If you are still interested in applying for this highly recognized scholarship award, please visit the Orlando Chapter STC website to download application guidelines and informational flyer at http://stc-orlando.org/education/college/melissa.asp

Both undergraduate and graduate students as well as graduating seniors are encouraged to apply. This is a great opportunity to be recognized for your hard work and academic pursuits by the Orlando Chapter STC, so don't delay!

From The Editor's Desk…
by Dalton Hooper, Orlando Chapter Newsletter Editor
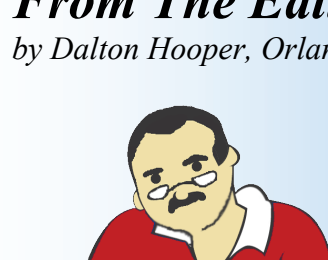
I had the opportunity to attend the 2008 American Medical Writers Association (AMWA) Orlando Conference on Friday and Saturday, February 29 and March 1, 2008. Our own Gail Lippincott was the keynote speaker on Friday night. She did us proud by presenting what was normally a dual presentation by herself and Dan Jones. Dan was unable to attend, and Gail carried on without missing a beat! She engaged the audience in lively discussion and was well-received. Good job, Gail!

Additionally, I had the honor of leading one of the workshops on Saturday. The topic was *Getting Yourself Hired (for that technical communication position)*. If you weren't able to attend, but are interested in this topic, there will be an additional opportunity to hear me speak on it via an STC webinar on Saturday morning, March 29, 2008. This webinar is being sponsored by the Washington, DC Chapter. Click on the following graphic to register or get additional information

Why I Didn't Hire You: Mental Notes From This Side of the Interview Table (Webinar)