Memo to Members

Sharing the Secret

By Kelli Pharo, Orlando Chapter President

On January 20th dozens of people: Orlando Chapter members, students, faculty, and business professionals from our community, gathered as part of our annual STC/FTC UCF Chapter meeting. Dave "The Shef" Sheffield encouraged us with his animated and rousing talk on making great choices that will propel us in our personal, academic, and professional lives. I know I was personally inspired to write down my life's goals—seven pillars of achievement are now pinned to the cork board in my office. The Shef says if you don't write them down, you'll never achieve them. Another thing The Shef taught us is the three things that influence our destination (results): attitude, intake, and associations. Bingo! Associations! As in, STC! Our little group can help shape your destination!

Besides the great presentation, some awesome networking, and some tasty treats (mmmm, cake), at last month's meeting we spilled a juicy secret we've been holding.

Last October I submitted our Chapter as a possible recipient for a grant from my company's charitable foundation—PBSJ Foundation. I requested a 3-year grant—enough to cover our annual Melissa Pellegrin Memorial Scholarship program as well as our annual High School Writing Competition program.

This December I was notified by formal letter that our Chapter is to receive $3,000 a year for next 3 years!

I broke the news to our administrative council at our December planning meeting and asked them to keep it a secret until the January meeting. At which time we were presented a giant, mock check for the $9,000—to the surprise of our Chapter members and guests in attendance! Thank you, PBSJ! We are very grateful for this most generous gift.

I hope you'll come and join us for our February meeting. You'll be glad you did. You never know what kind of surprises we have in store.

Cheers!
Kelli

Did You Know?

Early bird registration for the STC Summit in May ends February 18. Find out more at http://conference.stc.org/.

It's Time to Renew

It's that time of year again. . . time to renew your STC membership! If you haven't yet renewed your STC membership for 2009, we urge you to do so before February 28th.

One reason it's important to renew by February 28 is so that you will be able to vote for STC officers.

Did you know our very own W.C. Wiese is running for the office of 2nd Vice President? We want to show our support for W.C. by voting for him in the upcoming STC elections!

Another reason to renew **soon** and definitely **by March 15** is so you will not have to pay the STC

reinstatement fee of $15. Members who do not renew by mid-March are canceled. Once your membership has been canceled, you must pay a $15 reinstatement fee on top of your regular dues to be reinstated as a member.   So, what are you going to do? Renew!! We're looking forward to a great 2009 with YOU!

Congratulations Lillian McAnally and W.C. Wiese

Two of our own Orlando Chapter members received awards as a part of the Florida Technical Communications Competition (FTCC) this month.

For her *Florida's Turnpike Enterprise FY Annual Report*, **Lillian McAnally**, of PBS&J, received two **Distinguished** awards (for Technical Art, Annual Report Design and for Technical Publications, Reports) in addition to the **Best of Show** award for this

same report. (Rumor has it that Lillian and her guests swept the door prizes at the awards banquet too!)

For his *MEADS: Evolving Capabilities*, **W.C. Wiese**, of Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control, received an award of **Excellence** (for Technical Publications, Trade/News Articles).

Congratulations Lillian and W.C.!

Tool Tips

By David Coverston

Someone posted a question this week on one of the mailing lists I subscribe to, asking how to rename a group of files. Of course it wasn't a simple file renaming task; it involved removing letters in the middle of the file name and replacing them with numbers. So I fired off an email to the inquirer and told her about the tool I use: Bulk Rename Utility. It works great, and the price can't be beat: free!

Let's get started by going to http://www.bulkrenameutility.co.uk and

downloading the BRU_Setup_WinNTx 86.exe file. This version works with Windows Vista, XP, 2003, 2008, 2000, and NT. There's also a version for 64-bit Windows as well.

You can download a PDF version of the User Manual while you are there, although the help file that installs with the application contains the same information.

Double-click the file to run the installation routine. Click through the Setup, the License Agreement, the Set Destination Location, and Select Start Menu, dialog boxes. In the

Select Additional tasks, I recommend choosing the Install Windows Explorer Extension. This adds the Bulk Rename Utility to the Explorer context menu, which is where you probably do most of your file management chores anyway. Click OK on the Ready to Install dialog box and you are ready to go.

After the installation, you can run the program from the Programs menu, or by right-clicking a file in the explorer window (assuming you followed my advice and installed the extension).

Did You Know?

The Orlando chapter mentoring program is used as a model for other communities. The Academic Community SIG is linking up with Mike Murray to support a mentoring program based on the successful program at the University of Central Florida. Learn more at http://stc-ac.org/.

Active Membership Corner

By W.C. Wiese

Are you an active member? As you read this, we hope that you are one of the 39 members who have earned points to win an active member shirt at the end of the chapter year in June. Points are earned in a variety of ways, including attending meetings, serving on committees, presenting programs, and recruiting new members. Through January, monthly meeting attendance has run ahead of last year's figures. A series of excellent programs has brought out 26 more members and guests than last year, despite cancellation of the August program due to a weather emergency.

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

A total of 14 points are required to earn an active membership shirt at our awards celebration next June. Current leaders are listed to the right. Are you there yet?

See you at the next meeting!

Current Point Leaders:

- **Pharo**
- **Beck**
- **Lane**
- **Shambaugh**
- **Lippincott**
- **Coverston**
- **Higgins**
- **Hooper**
- **Kessler**
- **Wray**
- **Damron**
- **Garcia**
- **Selix**
- **Skawinski**
- **Bivins**
- **Voss**
- **Heath**
- **Wiese**
- **Sliger**
- **Kittrell**

Membership Survey Results

Did you know that the Orlando Chapter administrative council conducts a membership survey every other year? Did you know that we get lots of our ideas for meeting topics, location, night, and time from this member survey? We're working hard to meet your needs. Just glance through the following survey results to see.

If you'd like to be a part of our administrative council, and help to bring meaningful programs, competitions, awards, and recognition to our community of technical communicators, we welcome you. If you'd like to run for office, our elections are coming up soon. If you'd like to manage one of our committees, or contribute your talents to a committee support team, we could use your help. For More information, contact Kelli Pharo at president@stc-orlando.org.

CHAPTER 07/08 SURVEY RESULTS

LOCATION

Options	Percentage	Number of votes
WPCC	92.6%	25
Local restaurant	7.4%	2
Alternate location	14.8%	4
No response		1

MEETING DAY/TIME

Options	Percentage	Number of votes
Monday, 6:30 p.m.	7.4%	2
Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.	25.9%	7
Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.	14.8%	4
Thursday, 6:30 p.m.	14.8%	4
No response		1

Options	Percentage	Number of votes
First week	3.7%	1
Second week	7.4%	2
Third week	14.8%	4
Fourth week	14.8%	4
Doesn't matter	74.1%	20
No response		1

We have a tie between third and fourth week, but since we could not book the WPCC for the fourth week, we will meet on the third week.

TOPICS

	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Neither interested nor uninterested	Not very interested	Not at all interested
Tools and technology	85.7% (24 votes)	14.3% (4 votes)			
Employment tips	25% (7 votes)	42.9% (12 votes)	10.7% (3 votes)	7.1% (2 votes)	14.3% (4 votes)
Education	46.4% (13 votes)	28.6% (8 votes)	14.3% (4 votes)	7.1% (2 votes)	3.6% (1 vote)
STC happenings	7.1% (2 votes)	57.1% (16 votes)	17.9% (5 votes)	7.1% (2 votes)	10.7% (3 votes)

It seems that we have at least some interest in all of these topics. Using a scale of 1 vote = 5 points, then 1 vote = 4 points, and so on as the interest level drops, we will set the following priority:

1 – Tools and technology (136 points)
2 – Education (114 points)
3 – Employment tips (100 points)
4 – STC happenings (96 points)

If You Missed Our December Meeting...

By Daniel Beck

...you missed an informative presentation from Joe Welinske on trends in software user assistance. He shared the results of a WritersUA survey which showed what user assistance skills were most valued in industry and what tools were most heavily used. He also explained that while Windows Help is still something that user assistance professionals are producing, Web-based materials are becoming increasingly important.

Joe Welinske also gave us a fascinating history of the way Help-like information is presented on the Windows platform, from it's early days in Windows 3.1 to its current manifestations in Windows Vista. Yet he did say that Windows applications are not the only things out there, with mobile devices and Web applications gaining increasing prominence in users' lives.

For more information about user assistance and Joe Welinske, check out http://www.writersua.com/.

*Looking for a ♥lovely♥ place
to indulge your appetite
for information?*

Come to the Usability Buffet!

Presented by Karen Bachmann, STC Associate Fellow
Tuesday, February 17th at 6:30 p.m.
Winter Park Civic Center
Hosted by the STC Orlando Chapter

This lively, audience-driven session starts with a broad "tasting" of many different areas user-centered design process. The introduction describes the typical steps in the process, show how usability work fits within a typical development life cycle, and introduce some of the key deliverables such as user analysis, user interface prototypes, and usability test plans.

Following the overview, the audience takes over and selects larger helpings of select topics. Some of the dishes served at the usability buffet include:

- *User analysis*: Explore the techniques and methods of conducting user analysis.

- *UI design and prototyping*: Learn about the design process, design artifacts from conceptual to finished design, how to use prototyping, and tools for creating UI designs and prototyping.

- *Usability requirements*: Learn the fundamentals of usability requirements.

- *Usability testing*: Review the process of usability testing, from planning and recruiting through selecting test methods to conducting actual tests.

- *Implementing user-centered design*: Learn ways to evaluate the UCD needs at your organization, gain advocates and champions, and promote UCD.

Bring a healthy appetite for learning and join us for a fun evening!

Seating is limited, so RSVP Today: vicepresident@stc-orlando.org

Don't like to *learn* alone? Bring a friend! First-time meeting attendees can receive free admission. Visit the STC Orlando website www.stc-orlando.org for details.

Cost: $5 students, $8 STC members, $15 nonmember guests.

Congratulations Daniel Beck

Did you know that our **very own Daniel Beck** was recently accepted into **Sigma Tau Chi** (STX), the STC National Student Honor Society? Way to go, Daniel! Dan is the 3rd person to join the very elite group of folks from Orlando STC to be accepted into STX: Mary Ellen Gomrad and Peggy Bivins are the two other distinguished members.

We are proud of you, Daniel, and we knew you were more than deserving of this honor even before you received it! Congratulations!!!

If you are unfamiliar with STX, see below for details, copied from the STX web site:

The Society for Technical Communication encourages qualified students to apply for membership in its honorary societies, Sigma Tau Chi and Alpha Sigma.

Sigma Tau Chi (STX) recognizes students enrolled in a baccalaureate or graduate technical communication program who have a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or above, are exemplary participants in STC, and demonstrate the potential for significant contributions to the profession.

Alpha Sigma (AS) recognizes students enrolled in a two-year or certificate technical communication program who have a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or above, are active participants in STC, and demonstrate the potential to contribute to the profession.

Please encourage qualified studies to apply for membership in STX or AS. The application form is available on the STC Web site at http://www.stc.org/recog/awards01_STX-AS.asp.

Students who are accepted into STX or AS receive one year's membership in STC, a pin, and a T-shirt. The STC Board of Directors will notify the selected students after its January meeting.

Daniel Beck discusses FTC at the January 2009 meeting

Memo to Members is published regularly and is copyright 2008 by Orlando Chapter STC. If you would like to contribute an article or obtain permission to re-publish an article contained within this newsletter, please contact Tiana Sliger at newsletter@stc-orlando.org.

Memo to Members Managing Editor: Tiana Sliger newsletter@stc-orlando.org

Orlando Chapter Officers:
President: Kelli Pharo president@stc-orlando.org
Vice-President Dalton Hooper vicepresident@stc-orlando.org
Treasurer: Mark Wray treasurer@stc-orlando.org
Secretary: Cindy Skawinski secretary@stc-orlando.org

For more information about the Society for Technical Communication, or to join, contact:

Society for Technical Communication
901 N. Stuart St., Suite 904
Arlington, VA 22203

(703) 522-4114 Phone
(703) 522-2075 Fax
or visit www.stc.org