

Memo to Members

The newsletter of the Orlando Central Florida Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication



HOME ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

February 2010 (Supplemental)

25
02
2010

Memo to Members

Inside this issue:

- ➔ [President's Corner](#)
- ➔ [The View from Number Two](#)
- ➔ [From the Editor's Desk](#)
- ➔ [March STC Web Seminars](#)
- ➔ [If You Missed our January Meeting...](#)
- ➔ [Graduating? Laid Off? At-Risk? Fired?](#)
- ➔ [Chapter Meetings: Not Just for TCs](#)



Comments : [Leave a Comment »](#)

Categories : [February 2010 Supplemental](#)

President's Corner

by Kelli Pharo
Orlando Chapter President

VIEW A SELECTED MONTH

Select Month

SEARCH THIS SITE

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

To view details about a particular event, hover your mouse over the highlighted date. To RSVP, click on the highlighted date.

Regular Meeting		ADCO Meeting		Special Event		
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
April 2012						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					
May 2012						
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

STC LINKS

STC Headquarters
STC Orlando chapter
STC Palm Beaches chapter
STC SpaceTech chapter
STC Suncoast chapter

EMPLOYMENT

Follow

25

Memo to Members



wheels slip on the tracks or fall on all together.

In October 2008 I wrote in my monthly update about the great loss my family was experiencing due to the death of our beloved Great Dane. This month we are reliving that same sense of loss, as our sweet German Shepherd passed away unexpectedly this past weekend. *We'll miss you, Washaw.*

Many of you have gone through similar times of hardship, I'm sure. Especially in these recent times of high unemployment and financial turmoil. If you have never lost a job yourself, you surely know someone who has. STC Orlando is doing what we can to help those experiencing an "employment detour," as we kick-off our March month of employment.



Washaw and Kelli

Join us March 16th at the Winter Park Civic Center, 6:30 p.m., for our annual employment panel. A select group of employment experts will be available to answer your questions and speak about their individual fields of expertise.

Then on March 27th, at the Winter Park Civic Center Lake Island Building, 9:00 a.m. to noon, we will hold a career workshop—*An Unexpected Detour: How to (Re-)Enter Today's Job Market to Win!* Find more information about this workshop at www.AnUnexpectedDetour.com/Workshop.

I hope you'll plan to join us at one or more of our March events. Here's to getting back on track!

Kelli Pharo
STC Orlando Chapter President
president@stc-orlando.org

Comments : [Leave a Comment »](#)

Categories : [February 2010 Supplemental](#)

The View from Number Two

by Dalton Hooper
Orlando Chapter Vice President



Extra! Extra! Read all about it!

That used to be the cry of the newspaper boy (in my father's day) whenever some late-breaking news happened that missed the earlier edition and just couldn't wait for the next edition. Consequently, readers were offered an "extra" issue between the regular ones.

And so it is with this "extra" February issue of *Memo to Members*. There was simply too much news to report this month to cram it all in one issue. There were also some stories still in play at the time of our previous edition, but need to be shared

before our March issue.

Don't forget to renew

You only have a couple of days left to renew your STC and Orlando Chapter membership. Also:

Create a free website or blog at WordPress.com.
[Clicking here.](#)

NOT A MEMBER?

Want more information on being an STC Orlando Chapter member? You can contact our Membership Manager, David Coverston, by [clicking here](#). Your first meeting is free!

ACTIVE MEMBER SHIRTS

Want to be in the running for an Active Member polo shirt? You can contact our Active Members Manager, W.C. Wiese, by [clicking here](#).

RISING STARS



Want to help our Chapter in support of our educational outreach initiative? You can make a tax-free donation. Just click on the above image for more information.

STC ORLANDO LOGO ITEMS



Show your STC Orlando pride by purchasing an item imprinted with the STC Orlando logo! Click on the above image to see the catalogue and/or to place an order.

AMAZON.COM

- The limited offer to renew as or become a new Gold member expires 28 Feb.
- To vote in STC elections members must have renewed by 28 Feb.
- Member discounts on education (conference, webinars) for those who have not renewed will end on 28 Feb.

March is employment month

Traditionally, our March meetings have had an employment theme. This year, your Orlando Chapter will be using the employment theme during the entire month!

- Semi-weekly emails will be sent to you throughout March containing links to valuable information designed to help you in your job search or to enhance your existing career.
- The regular monthly meeting on March 16 will offer a panel of employment experts in an hour-long Q & A session.
- A hands-on job search skills improvement workshop will be held on Saturday, March 27. Find details later in this issue or visit www.AnUnexpectedDetour.com/Workshop.

As you can see, your Orlando Chapter STC is hard at work serving your interests. If there is something you would like your leadership to consider that we are not already doing, please let us know.

Thank you.



Comments : [Leave a Comment »](#)

Categories : [February 2010 Supplemental](#)

From the Editors' Desk

by Michael Wilson
Associate Editor



We are pleased to bring you a supplementary February edition of Memo to Members. We have plenty to talk about this month, especially since the US Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics changed its Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH). In case you have not heard, "Technical Writer" has its own chapter.

According to STC's website, " 'Having the US Bureau of Labor Statistics recognize technical writers as a profession distinct from all other writing professions independently confirms STC's claim that not all writers can do technical writing,' explained STC Immediate Past President Mark Clifford, who was STC President at the time of the initial announcement. 'We're very pleased to have this distinction made in an important reference tool that is so well respected by the human resource community.' "

Employment in the technical writing field is expected to grow 18 percent. And in celebration of the Orlando Chapter's March employment theme, the timing could not be better. In fact, the *OOH* states job prospects for unemployed technical writers with effective technical and communication skills are promising. To see more information, visit the [OOH website](#).

And finally, we hope that you join us March 27th for Dalton Hooper's "An Unexpected Detour" workshop focusing on how the job market environment has changed and what you can do to change with it. To register, visit www.AnUnexpectedDetour.com/Workshop.



Click on the above image to go to Amazon.com. A percentage of your purchase is rebated to the Orlando Chapter.

VISIT US ON FACEBOOK...



... OR ON TWITTER!



SOCIETY FOR TECHNICAL
COMMUNICATION (STC)



Mission: STC advances the theory and practice of technical communication across all user abilities and media so that both businesses and customers benefit from safe, appropriate, and effective use of products, information, and services.

VISITS TO THIS SITE

10,637 views

March STC Web Seminars

25
02
2010



STC has released the full schedule of webinars for March 2010. To view the entire listing, as well as the collection of archived webinars available for viewing 24/7, check out the [STC website](#).

Wednesday, 3 March

Members \$79; Nonmembers \$149; Student Member \$29

1:00-2:00 PM EST (GMT-5)

[Process Re-Engineering for Topic-Based Authoring](#)

Presented by Rob Hanna

Topic-based authoring offers significant process improvements if properly executed. It also represents significant change for all users touching the content development life-cycle. This webinar is intended to highlight the benefits of moving to topic-based authoring and discuss the many challenges you will face.

You should attend this webinar if you are a:

-Documentation Manager/Director

- seeking measurable process improvement strategies
- considering content management technologies
- investigating new content standards such as DITA or S1000D

-Senior Technical Communicator/Lead Writer

- facing challenges with managing documentation projects
- seeking innovation to improve how you manage writers and content
- trying to make content management work for you

Rob Hanna a content management consultant and taxonomy specialist with CCH Canadian Limited. He has worked with large companies such as Sun Microsystems, Northrop Grumman, Fujitsu, and Xerox, to help design and deploy content management solutions that work. He is heavily involved in the technical communication community having served as an STC board member and president of the Toronto STC chapter. He has presented topics on content management at the STC annual conference for the past five years and is offering a workshop on Information Mapping at this year's conference in Dallas.

Tuesday, 9 March

Members \$79; Nonmembers \$149; Student Member \$29

1:00-2:00 PM EST (GMT-5)

[Strategies for Achieving Success](#)

Presented by Suzanna Laurent

Attaining the success you want in life—in every area of life—requires more than mere daydreaming and vague desire. Goal-setting is essential to success—and a self-motivated person is always working toward a program of personal goals. To become self-motivated, use the five success essentials taught in this workshop to change your thinking, your attitude, and your behavior. Tapping into your unlimited potential allows you to progress, grow, and change.

Suzanna Laurent is a Fellow of STC who recently served seven years on the Society's Board of Directors, culminating with International President in 2005–2006. Suzanna was also selected as one of the Top Ten Women in the nation by the American Business Women's Association for her outstanding career achievements. Business She has presented over 140 chapter programs, leadership workshops, keynotes, and sessions at more than 44 STC conferences from Toronto to Hawaii. She also received the first-ever STC Volunteer of the Year award at the annual conference in 2006.

Suzanna has been a technical communicator since earning her degree in 1986. She spent more than half of those years developing various types of online help for software applications. She has also developed course materials for three different government agencies. Suzanna is president of the Communications Design Group in Mustang, OK. Her consultant firm specializes in a wide variety of writing services.

Tuesday, 16 March

Members \$79; Nonmembers \$149; Student Member \$29

1:00–2:00 PM EST (GMT–4)

[Working with Contract Agencies](#)

Presented by Cheryl Landes

More technical communication jobs are becoming project-based or on contracts through placement agencies that can range from one month to a year or more. In this session, Cheryl Landes, an experienced contractor, will provide tips on how to work with agencies that place technical communicators on contract assignments. She will also describe the current climate at the agencies and how job seekers can navigate this intricate maze so that their resumes will be noticed and presented to the hiring clients.

Cheryl Landes an award-winning technical writer and STC Associate Fellow, is the owner of Tabby Cat Communications in Seattle. She has more than 19 years of experience as a regular, full-time employee and contract technical communicator in several industries: computer software, marine transportation, manufacturing, HVAC, energy metering systems, and the trade press. Her experience as a technical writing and indexing contractor through agencies spans 15 years for clients in the Northwest and Northeast.

Cheryl is a member of the board of directors for the American Society for Indexing (ASI). She is active in two STC chapters, Boston and Puget Sound, and three international SIGs. She speaks frequently at ASI and STC meetings throughout the United States and Canada.

Tuesday, 23 March

Members \$79; Nonmembers \$149; Student Member \$29

1:00–2:00 PM EST (GMT–4)

[Optimizing the Source Using Translation Memory](#)

Presented by Joseph Campo

How many times have you written something and known that you wrote something similar, but can't remember where it was or how it was written? So you write a new sentence. If you could only find that text and replicate it, you would save money and time for your translation team by reusing already-translated text strings and would produce more consistent documentation. This webinar describes a pilot project that tested a potential solution to this issue using translation memory to optimize the source documentation.

Joseph Campo is the manager of technical documentation at Dassault Systemes SolidWorks Corp. in Concord, MA. He has 12 years experience working in the technical writing field. He is very interested in languages, translation issues, and ways to reduce localization costs by improving the source documentation. You can reach him at joseph.campo@3ds.com.

Tuesday, 30 March

Members \$79; Nonmembers \$149; Student Member \$29

1:00–2:00 PM EST (GMT–4)

[Getting the News Out—Writing News Releases](#)

Presented by Joyce Lofstrom

Use your technical communication skills to transition into an expanded role in public relations. Find out how to write a news release to help build awareness of your organization or share news of new research or products. This role may become reality as budgets and staffs shrink. During this webinar, attendees will learn how to determine what is news and how to write a basic news release. Discussion will include

current news release best practices and use of multimedia news releases.

Joyce Lofstrom is senior manager, corporate communications, for the Chicago-based Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society, the largest US healthcare association focused on information technology. Her career has focused on health, food, and nutrition communications and public relations. She was also food editor and features writer for the Daily Herald newspaper in suburban Chicago. Joyce has been an adjunct instructor in public relations at DePaul University and Loyola University in Chicago. She has a BS degree in home economics-journalism and a MS degree in human environmental sciences-communications from the University of Missouri. She is a member of STC and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. She is a member of the board of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Health Academy and is co-chair for the 2010 PRSA Health Academy Conference.

Comments : [Leave a Comment »](#)

Categories : [February 2010 Supplemental](#)

If You Missed Our January Meeting...

by Michele Damron
Chapter Achievements Chair

25
02
2010



. . .you missed a dynamic, exciting presentation given by Scott Abel, a.k.a. “The Content Wrangler.” This joint meeting of the University of Central Florida’s Future Technical Communicators (FTC) and the Orlando STC chapter was held on the UCF campus in the student union. We had a great turnout, with 58 attending.

A self-described “structured content evangelist, content management strategist, social media choreographer, dj, music producer,” Scott brought his varied experiences and interests together in a presentation packed with information both about the current state of our profession as well as where we may be headed.

Change, community, and content management were concepts woven throughout his talk. Users’ expectations are changing: they want the answers to their questions immediately, without having to read a manual or search a web page. And, users want the answers to be available when, where, and how they need them. As Scott said, “No one cares who wrote it as long as it’s useful and correct.” For example, social communities made up of product or software users often answer users’ questions faster than the manufacturers or developers can. Some companies are even going to a form of community publishing, where the customers can actually edit the instructions online. YouTube, with over 500 million viewers, is another great example of instructional content being published by users for users.

Speaking of change, social applications will continue to morph to better meet users’ needs. Scott predicted an eventual convergence of television, learning, and the internet, with each user having a large screen containing television, internet, and social media applications, with each app being connected to the others. This convergence will provide great opportunities for technical communicators to craft content in a variety of media. Scott also predicted that the new iPad (released the day after this meeting) will change user expectations to such an extent that it will eventually “smash Kindle!” Hmmm, very interesting . . .

Content management and modularization are key! Scott emphasized that in this emerging technical communication reality, content must be “device-agnostic” and context-independent, created with the goal of giving users content when, where (to what device), and how they want it. To that end, he advised both students and long-time practitioners of technical communication to become literate in XML and DITA. Admitting that “not everyone can be trained to do this,” he nevertheless made it plain that the rewards are great for those willing to put the time and effort into learning

these newer ways of working and communicating.

Resources mentioned during the presentation

- Conversation and Community: The Social Web for Documentation,

by Anne Gentle

- DITA 101, by Ann Rockley, Charles Cooper, and Steve Manning

- Managing Writers: A Real-World Guide to Managing Technical Documentation, by Richard Hamilton

To connect with Scott

- Web: <http://thecontentwrangler.com/>

- facebook: Scott Patrick Abel

- Twitter: <http://twitter.com/scottabel>

Editor's note: Scott Abel's presentation was recorded (audio and video). It is currently being edited and will be available for viewing soon on the Orlando Chapter main website at www.stc-orlando.org.

Comments : [Leave a Comment »](#)

Categories : [February 2010 Supplemental](#)

Chapter Meetings: Not just for TCs

by Dalton Hooper
Orlando Chapter Vice President

Yes. It's true. STC stands for Society for *Technical Communication*. But, have you noticed that our Orlando Chapter meetings often are more far-reaching than that? Our themes and guest speakers are frequently applicable and interesting to more than just technical communicators.

For example, our annual March meetings are built around an employment theme, offering employment-related information useable by anyone, regardless of profession. In another example, last May (2009), we enjoyed a dynamic presentation by Ali Turiano, meteorologist at Channel 13 in Orlando.

Some of us who attended wrote the following collaborative piece summarizing her presentation.

It was a dark and stormy night...really, it was. But it was the perfect night to have a meteorologist as a guest speaker at our STC Orlando Chapter monthly meeting.

Last night, Ali Turiano, from Central Florida News 13, was our special guest at the Winter Park Civic Center. She spoke to us about what it's like to be a meteorologist and how she practices technical communication.

One thing was clear, even if the weather wasn't, Ali loves her job. A self-defined weather geek, she loves the study of tornadoes, hurricanes, plate tectonics, and all kinds of math and sciences.

One of the first things Ali learned the hard way, early in her career, is that the viewing public does not want to know all she knows, and she's one sharp cookie. They want three things, especially here in Central Florida—the high temperature, the low temperature, and if it will rain. But Ali admits she still finds a way to throw in a bit more technical facts now and then.

The audience at last night's meeting was quite engaged, asking a myriad of questions,

9
02
2010



Ali Turiano
Meteorologist
Channel 13

ranging from the meteorologically inclined to the “what’s it like to do live TV” type of inquiry.

And if you’re wondering about the latter, Ali had some behind-the-scenes dirt to spill. Like the fact that the other Channel 13 meteorologists regularly try to “break her” by saying funny things to her through her ear piece while she’s broadcasting. (They haven’t succeeded yet!) And she told about the time when, working at a station in another state, she missed the step up to the green screen and fell on the floor on camera. Aren’t we all glad that we make most of our mistakes where a live audience of thousands can’t see us?



Some of our audience members assumed that since Ali looks so glamorous on camera, she must have her own hair stylist, makeup artist, and wardrobe coordinator. Not so! She indicated that only certain top-tier shows, such as the Today Show, provide makeup artists and hair stylists for their meteorologists.

Even more interesting, we learned that she creates all of her own graphics daily from several weather graphics software applications. Her training on how to use these applications often occurs during the five- or ten-minute breaks between live on-air weather forecasts!

Another interesting fact of TV Meteorologists at channel 13 is that they do not read from a teleprompter! Everything they say on camera is unscripted and ad hoc. This is in contrast to the news anchors, who are reading nearly everything they say.

So, whether or not your friends, family, or coworkers are technical communicators, invite them to join you at an upcoming Orlando Chapter meeting. If it is their first time, they get in free as our guest. You never know. They just might enjoy our meetings which are broad ranging and often contain interesting, unexpected tidbits that can be related to anyone’s life or career.

You never know what you might learn at an STC Orlando meeting!

Comments : [2 Comments »](#)

Categories : [February 2010 Supplemental](#)

