

Memo to Members

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



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August 2010

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Memo to Members



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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
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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!

President's Corner

by Dalton Hooper
Orlando Chapter President

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Big Shoes to Fill



First of all, I want to thank all of you for allowing me to be your new president. Secondly, I want to thank our Immediate Past President, Kelli Pharo, for the outstanding leadership she provided over the past four years – two years as vice president and two years as president. With Kelli at our helm, we were able to reclaim our rightful place as a *Community of Distinction* for the fifth time. Thank you, Kelli!

The New Leadership Team

I also want to introduce you to my co-officers for 2010 – 2011.

Vice president: Debra Johnson

As the Lead Technical Communicator at Wyndham Vacation Ownership, Debra is currently responsible for setting up and managing the Technical Communications discipline within Information Technology. Debra has gained a unique perspective of the industry over the years and has found the STC, both nationally and locally, vital to the Technical Communication profession.

Secretary: Michele Damron

A former Melissa Pellegrin Memorial Scholarship recipient and graduate of the UCF Technical Communication Master's program, Michele Damron joined STC Orlando in early 2008. For the past two years – and continuing this year – Michele has served on the STC Administrative Council as the Community Achievement Award (CAA) chair.

Treasurer: Mark Wray

Mark Wray is a senior member of the Orlando Chapter, serving as Treasurer for the past three years. He is an Information Systems Training Specialist at the Finance and Accounting department at the University of Central Florida (UCF). Mark earned his bachelor's degree in Liberal Studies from UCF in 2002, with concentrations in technical writing and organizational psychology.

With Debra, Michele, Mark, Kelli, and YOU on the Orlando STC team this year, I have no doubt we will be even more successful going forward.

“What can we do for you today?”

This is our chapter slogan for 2010 – 2011. Think of it as our collective question to the Orlando area technical communication community.

On Saturday, July 17, 2010, the new Administrative Council and I met to map out the strategy for the coming year. During this time, I shared my goals for this chapter.

1. Increase the revenue to our chapter.
2. Increase the current value of our chapter to its participants.

It is that second goal from which our slogan sprang. “What can we do for you today?” Do we know the answer to that question? In my personal ad hoc research in the Orlando area, I have found that

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

Our Chapter web store is now open!
[Click here for great 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.

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1. An overwhelming majority of technical communicators do not belong to STC.
2. A majority of those who do not belong to STC have never heard of STC.
3. Of those who have heard of STC, but do not belong, the majority do not believe there is sufficient value to them personally in joining (negative ROI).

I do not know how many people in the Orlando area identify themselves as technical communicators, but I have no doubt it is many hundreds. There is much to do. And only we can do it.

If you have a co-worker or friend who is a technical communicator, why not invite them to join you at one of our monthly chapter meetings? Remember, if it is your friend or co-worker's first meeting with us, it is complimentary. And while you are at it, please be sure to ask your colleagues a question on our behalf: "What can we do for you today?"

Their answer is important to our future.



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The View from Number Two

by Debra Johnson
Orlando Chapter Vice President



I am currently the Lead Technical Communicator at Wyndham Vacation Ownership and am responsible for setting up and managing the Technical Communications discipline within Wyndham's Information Technology department.

When I decided to put my name in the running for VP 2010, I really wasn't quite sure what to expect...

I mean...how was I going to measure up? Would I be effective? Can I handle the position along with my job? I have to admit I have been a bit anxious and frantic during these first few weeks

in office. But, you know...I am really looking forward to a very exciting year ahead. I have a lot of help from some extraordinary people and only have to follow the seasoned path already they have laid out for me...

Definition: Veep

Ok...so exactly what will I be doing...?

Well, I have been told that my primary function of VP is to be the Programs Chair. This means that I will be responsible for arranging our monthly chapter meeting speakers. At the meetings, I will make the pre-meeting announcements/promotions to our members and guests. I acquire the door prizes that are given out at the meetings... acquiring them through purchase or donation... hint, hint! J

There are certain months where the bulk of the meeting planning and logistics are handled by others in our chapter, although, I am certainly going to be right there providing my complete support.

Those months are:

- August - This is our first meeting of the new chapter year, it's during this month we hold our annual "Washlines" meeting where we recap our experiences at the Annual STC Summit recently held in May..... This year it's all about TEXAS!!!
- January - this is the month we hold our annual FTC/STC joint meeting. It takes place on campus at the University of Central Florida. The current FTC President, Sarah Baca usually takes the lead on this, however, President Hooper and I will



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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.

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10,637 views

work closely with her.

- ☞ April – is our month to hold our annual High School Writing Competition awards banquet. June – is the month we hold our annual end of year banquet
- ☞ March usually has an employment–theme, although not always. I am responsible for this meeting. In the past, we have done everything from job fairs to employment panels for this meeting. I will be looking for your suggestions and feedback...
- ☞ The remaining months, September, October, November, December, February, and May, are the months I must arrange a speaker/program. I have three solid so far...so look forward to hearing from a Senior Medical Writer, a Senior Business Analyst, and a Senior Technical Communicator turned novelist, just to name a few.... and I am working on a few others with the help of you all!

I still can use your suggestions and feedback on speakers...or if you would like to present on a topic, please contact me at vicepresident@stc-orlando.org

Another important job for me is to make sure I am available to assist and support our President, Dalton Hooper; Secretary, Michele Damron; and Treasurer, Mark Wray, as well as, the rest of our Administrative Council leaders. But most importantly, I am here for you... So look for me to call the meetings to order, introduce our guest speakers/programs, and give away those amazing door prizes... Whoo Hoo!

So until next month...

P.S. See you next week on August 17, 2010 at 6:30 pm at the Winter Park Convention Center. Bring someone with you!!!

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XVI — Dallas in Orlando — For a Texas–Size STC Learning Opportunity

by Dan Voss



August 17: Don't Miss The Big 'D'!

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Over the years, Washlines has certainly had its memorable characters. One wistfully recalls Kelli the sultry casino hostess with Hubby the burly bouncer. The unforgettable moustachioed Mark “Rhett” Wray. The redoubtable W.C. “Great Locomotive Chase” Wiese, complete with striped engineer’s hat. The infamous Darth Voss.

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So mark your calendars and be sure to be in The Big ‘D’ (a.k.a., Winter Park Civic Center) Tuesday, August 17, at 6:30 p.m. to continue our unbroken 16–year Washlines tradition (that HAS to be some kind of a record! 😊).

Following the usual social networking time and a brief business meeting, eight chapter members who attended the 57th annual international STC conference in Dallas in May will bring you a full–blown mini–conference in a unique format that is 50% progression, 50% Dallas/Texas ambiance—and 110% fun.

The format is designed to simulate a realistic conference experience—including the sometimes vexing challenge of selecting the selections you attend from a staggering array of fascinating and informational alternatives.

Eight Big ‘D’– or otherwise Texas–themed progression tables will offer you the

opportunity to choose from 16 mini-presentations covering a wide range of subject areas within technical communication (see box).

The complete program is published in this edition and will also be available as a printed handout at the event. A word of warning, however—choose now (with first and second choices for each rotation), because the mini-conference, just like the real thing, will fly past you at a dizzying pace.

Five or six venues will be open in each of three 25-minute rotations; two or three will be closed, thereby allowing the table hosts to take a break and attend one rotation at another venue so they can acquire as well as share conference information.

In addition to choosing which three venues you are going to visit, you will also be faced with a smorgasbord of choices at many of the tables. The number of topics at the venues ranges from 1 to 4, and the level of possible treatment varies from brief summaries to in-depth presentations, based on the number of topics on the menu as well as the audience's preferences. Each rotation at each venue will be different, but all with well-prepared material and some with valuable handouts to boot.

Two of the venue hosts are offering a reprise of sessions they presented in Dallas; a third is offering unique leadership insights from within the STC Board of Directors. The remaining five will be sharing what they learned from conference sessions.

Your table hosts will be competing vigorously for your attendance by offering not only information, experience, and handouts, but also a wide range of trinkets, goodies, and other bribes to lure you unabashedly to their venues.

We literally do not know exactly what will happen at Washlines XVI until it happens (just as in the previous 15 Washlines sessions), but we do know this—it will be richly varied, vastly informative, thoroughly entertaining, probably quite loud, and unquestionably a whole lot of fun!

TOPICS AT WASHLINES XVI			
Visual Explanations for Writers	Humor as Stress Reliever	Motivating without Authority (w/ LEGOs)	The Art of Questioning
Content Management	STC Leadership Day	STC Approves Certification	Feedback from STC Community Advisory Committee
	A Personal Voice in Audio	Evangelizing Yourself	Universal Usability
Documentation Delivery Systems	Teaching Online	Using Stories for Usability	... and MORE!

Washlines XVI Program

R1 = Rotation 1 (7:25–7:50) R2 = Rotation 2 (7:50–8:15)

R3 = Rotation 3 (8:15–8:40)

C = Closed O = Open

(click to enlarge)

Venue Theme	Host	R1	R2	R3	Topics	Venue Color
Walker, Texas Rangers	Kelli Pharo	○	○	○	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motivating Without Authority (LEGO Serious Play) The Art of Questioning 	Black
Dallas Cowboys	Debra Johnson	○	○	○	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content Management in a Nutshell Certificate Program 	Blue
Texas Longhorns	W.C. Wiese	○	○	○	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STC Leadership Day at 2010 International Conference STC Approver Certification Feedback from STC Community Advisory Committee 	Burnt Orange
Cotton-Eyed Joe	Lillian McAnally	○	○	○	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You Need It When? Project/Time Management for Editors (see conference presentation) 	White
cowboy	Karen Lane	○	○	○	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selections from Technical Editing SIG Progression Developing a Personal Voice in Audio Evangelizing Yourself Writing and Testing for Universal Usability 	Brown
Tex-Mex	Patricia Cruz	○	○	○	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual Explanations for Writers 	Yellow
Remember the Alamo	Dan Voss	○	○	○	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humor in the Workplace: A Styptic for the Razor Cuts of Stress (one of his conference presentations) 	Grey
Frito-Lay	Erika Higgins	○	○	○	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using Stories for More Effective Usability Documentation Delivery System Alternatives Making the Transition from Stand-Up to Online Teaching 	Red
Total	8 Presenters	6/2	5/3	5/3	16 Mini-Presentations	

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Fun with Numb3rs

by Mark Wray
Orlando Chapter Treasurer

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It's summertime, and the budgeting is easy

I'm sure those are not the right song lyrics, but they do apply to this season of our chapter year. There are few, if any, transactions that occur from mid-June until the chapter begins its new year with the August Washlines recap of the annual STC Summit. As chapter treasurer, I'm taking advantage of the lull to catch up with long-delayed tasks, file paperwork, and plan for the upcoming year, and what a year it promises to be!



In 2009, the Society for Technical Communication adopted a new budgeting and funding model that required a number of substantial changes to the way our local chapter operates. Prior to the change, the bulk of the chapter's income resulted from a small portion of members' annual dues rebated to us each month, based on the number of Orlando local chapter members as indicated on their original membership application or renewal. Those monthly rebates, plus the chapter's local fundraising efforts allowed us to offer programs of interest to our members, and fund our education and scholarship initiatives, including the Melissa Pellegrin Scholarship and the annual high-school writing competition. Over time and through careful stewardship, the chapter nurtured this process to create a nest egg which we could draw upon to cover any financial shortfalls between the monthly rebate checks from STC.

Beginning in late 2008 however, the worldwide economic downturn and



resultant steep drop in the annual Technical Communication Summit attendance forced STC to withhold even those modest chapter rebates in the interest of its own survival as an organization. This change, the most significant by far, marked the end of an era. Two additional changes were soon to follow; STC began requiring

chapters to change their fiscal year to mirror a calendar year, and to submit an 18-month, zero-based budget. The budget was to cover the time period from June 2009 through December 2010. The chapter's Administrative Council (AdCo) and your elected officers reviewed and approved that chapter budget in September 2009, and it is under that budget that the chapter is currently operating.

Zero-based means that the spending plan begins at zero for each year, and each program or initiative that an organization undertakes must be defended and justified before it is funded. In practice, this means our chapter should not expect to continue to accrue savings as we did in the past. We will soon need to develop our budget for 2011, and pass that budget to STC for approval. At this time, the process STC will use to evaluate our budget request, and the mechanism by which the organization will fund chapter initiatives remain unclear. STC will soon begin discussion on these questions, and chapter treasurers expect to learn the outcome of the discussion soon thereafter. In the interim however, the Orlando chapter has sufficient resources to carry us through the remainder of this year.

Change, while sometimes difficult, is a constant. We did not seek out these recent changes to our funding model and budgeting process; instead, the changes found us. Despite that, we can recognize opportunity embedded in these changes, providing potential for the chapter to increasingly improve the way in which we serve our local members. If we can make a compelling case that certain initiatives and activities are in demand by our local chapter members, I think we can get funding for those activities under this new financial model. Committee chairs, which largely comprise the chapter's AdCo, are integral to this process, and I would implore the chairs to plan their activities for 2011 just as they would have normally, and carefully estimate the financial requirements necessary to accomplish their goals for this coming year. If you are a chapter member at large, please vote with your body by attending monthly meetings at the Winter Park Civic Center; see the schedule and prospective meeting topics on the chapter Web site.

Finally, I want to publicly state that I am actively seeking a fellow Orlando chapter member to begin to learn the tasks associated with the treasurer position. I firmly believe in succession planning for organizations, and as I begin the fourth year as your chapter treasurer, I want to identify and mentor someone else who has the desire to take a more active role in chapter leadership. Please contact me at treasurer@stc-orlando.org if you are interested in learning more about this leadership position, or if you know someone who might be.

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Orlando Chapter EOY Banquet

A Year in Review

April 20, 2010 we wrapped up the end of our chapter year with preparations for the coming summer months, and the STC End of the Year Banquet was an opportunity to look back at the year's accomplishments and recognize those who dedicated themselves and their time to present interesting and relevant chapter

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meetings as well as promote the organization and its mission through community aid and involvement.

Our Active Members, (pictured) Kelli Pharo, Karen Lane, Alex Garcia, Michele Damron, Jon Kessler, W.C. Weise, Gail Lippincott, Mark Wray, David Covertson, Dalton Hooper, and Cindy Skawinski, each received STC's signature embroidered polo shirt along with the applause for a job well done!

And as always because there are eternally more responsibilities than persons to fill them, we wanted to take the time to express our gratitude to those who always take on challenges to fill the gaps when the need arises throughout the chapter year. Kelli Pharo, David Covertson, Karen Lane, W.C. Weise, Cindy Skawinski, Dalton Hooper, Alex Garcia, Erika Higgins, Jon Kessler, Michele Damron, and Mark Wray (pictured) all were recognized for their commitment and dedication to our professional organization. Check out our photo slide show of the event!



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Leadership Day, July 17, 2010

The Path to a Revised Vision

Again this year as always, STC held its annual meeting to plan for the upcoming year. Leadership Day is a time for all committee members to gather and give input on how to improve our chapter and expand our capabilities for our members. Among the presentations, Dalton Hooper's motto, "What can we do for you today?" led the motivation for our planning this year. Overall, you will notice in the coming year that we have again committed ourselves to increasing the value of services we provide to members. Among ideas presented, we are most excited about pursuing avenues to allow for you, as a member, to participate even if time constraints prevent you from attending our monthly meetings.

As always, Leadership Day is a great way to get involved in the future of our professional organization, and if you would like more information, please email us or

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come to our next monthly meeting, August 17th, for Washlines XVI! As an addition to our newsletter this month, we've included the photo slide show below of our Leadership Day meeting.



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