

# Memo to Members

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

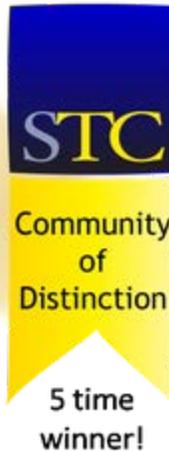


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## July 2011

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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
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

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## From the Editor's Desk



Alex Garcia

It is with great pleasure that I assume the role of Editor for Memo-to-Members, your gateway to news and information about the Orlando Chapter STC, for the 2011-2012 chapter year.

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First, a little bit about myself: I have double degrees from the University of Central Florida in Engineering Technology and English: Technical Communication. I joined STC, and the Orlando Chapter, in 2004 as a student member. Throughout my time with the chapter, I've served as hospitality chair, mentorship program chair (both for the mentees and the mentors), and most recently, as chair for the Gloria Jaffe Outstanding Technical Communicator Award committee. I spent five years as a Space Shuttle Engineer at the Kennedy Space Center before surviving two strenuous short term

assignments as a Proposal Editor at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control in Orlando. I am currently looking for my next adventure.

My hope for this newsletter is to make it as interactive as possible. Throughout this year, I'd like to work with the STC Orlando Communications and Public Relations committees to integrate the newsletter into the chapter's social networking footprint.

So, what would YOU like to read about and see in Memo-to-Members? Feel free to email me at [newsletter@stc-orlando.org](mailto:newsletter@stc-orlando.org), or comment below.

Until next time, enjoy this special summer issue!

Alex Garcia  
Editor  
Orlando Chapter STC Memo to Members

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## President's Corner

By Karen Lane  
President  
Orlando Chapter STC

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I'm very excited to have the opportunity to serve as the Orlando Chapter President for 2011-2012, and I'll be sharing some of my ideas with you in this series of newsletter articles.

First, an introduction: Some of you may know me from my presence at monthly chapter meetings, since I have been a chapter member since 1994. My current work is as a freelance technical editor and indexer, which I have been doing since my graduate school years at UCF, earning a master's degree in technical writing along the way. From 2001 to

### 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

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.

### AMAZON.COM



Karen Lane

2006, I served as the Orlando Chapter Treasurer, and since then I have been your Employment Manager, sending out job notices as they were sent to me by recruiters and employers.

We in the Orlando Chapter are very fortunate to have a dedicated and diligent group of committee chairs and members. You will be hearing from them from time to time about their various plans for our chapter. For now, I will tell you about some chapter news of which you may not yet be aware.

In the spring, your Administrative Council (AdCo) and general membership each voted to approve a plan to merge two sister chapters, Orlando and SpaceTech (in Brevard County). That initiative is moving forward as we await Society board approval. Once the merger is complete, I hope we will be seeing some of our Brevard colleagues at our meetings, and it's also under consideration to include the Brevard members in some of our programs, perhaps by remote access.

In another exciting development, the Administrative Council voted at its Leadership Retreat in mid-July to increase the number of voting members on the Council by the addition of two at-large directors, as permitted by our chapter bylaws. The election for these positions will be held at the regular chapter meeting in August. We look forward to the increased input the new directors will provide as we plan chapter activities.

Speaking of the Leadership Retreat, I'm very pleased to report that in addition to the members of the AdCo attending to review the chapter's progress and plans, we had the pleasure of welcoming several UCF students who are active in the FTC (Future Technical Communicators) club: Jennifer Blackwell, Bethany Bowles, Michelle Llamas, and recent graduate Jennifer Wolff. We certainly hope they will become active members of our chapter and give us the benefit of their unique insights on a variety of relevant topics. Their enthusiasm and energy was inspiring to us "veterans," and they brainstormed many good ideas and volunteered to serve on committees. And they are by no means the only students who have taken leadership roles in the chapter. This past year Patricia Cruz, then a student and now a UCF graduate, co-chaired the chapter mentoring program and now co-chairs the Community Achievement Award Committee. You will be hearing more about Patricia in the months and years to come. And let us not forget Sarah Baca, recent UCF graduate, who has stepped forward to serve as your chapter treasurer, a position of great responsibility and one she is well equipped to hold. Our chapter is fortunate to have the energy of all its members across the age spectrum.

One last initiative that I'd like to tell you about concerns the chapter's public face to the world: our Web site. We are very fortunate to have an expert webmaster in Jon Kessler, and he has agreed to undertake a major project to move our site in a new direction. For this he needs your help. We are asking everyone to assist by thinking about what you would like to see that we could realistically provide. I urge you to look around the Web at other organizations' sites and pick out a few that you think might inspire our new design. Heading up the effort to collect site suggestions is Michelle Llamas. If you send the URLs of the sites you're recommending to Michelle by August 6, she will pass along the information to Jon. Who knows—your suggestion might just be the one to seed our new site!



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

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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.

VISITS TO THIS SITE

As always, I welcome your comments and suggestions ([president@stc-orlando.org](mailto:president@stc-orlando.org)), and I hope you will find—as I did—that chapter membership can be both professionally rewarding and fun. All you have to do is join in.

10,627 views

Looking forward to seeing you at our August meeting—Washlines—and all year round.

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## A View From Number Two



Debra Johnson

*[Editor's Note: In the originally published article, Bethany Bowles was listed as FTC President. She is actually the Vice-President of FTC and has also volunteered to co-manage the Mentoring program this year. The new FTC president is Edward Petrowitz and the "January" bullet has been updated to reflect this correction.]*

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by Debra Johnson  
Vice President  
Orlando Chapter STC

*Debra is currently the Lead Documentation Specialist at Wyndham Vacation Ownership in Orlando, FL. She is responsible for setting up and leading the Technical Communications discipline within Wyndham's Information Technology department.*

Well, here it is, July 2011, and I am back in my second term as your VP. It has been a great year for me. I really wasn't quite sure what to expect last year, and now I do. I was honored this past April with the Gloria Jaffee Outstanding Technical Communicator Award for 2011 and a Chapter Service Award at the end of the year Banquet in June... How amazing is that? ...oh, I also earned my first Active Member shirt...yea!

I have to admit I was a bit scared in the beginning of last year, but now it feels so natural. We have a new president, a new treasurer, and two new positions on the Ad Co. We are looking to make some much needed changes on our path to "Distinction". I am really looking forward to a very exciting year ahead.

## On the Agenda for 2011-2012

So what is on the agenda for this coming year...

As before, my primary function of VP is to be the Programs Chair. I will be lining up some terrific monthly chapter meeting topics and/or speakers.

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 California, dude!!!
- November is the month we break bread together and give thanks.....stay tuned for the location
- December - we have off for the holidays
- 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 new FTC President, Edward Petrowitz, usually takes the lead on this, however, President Karen Lane and I will work closely with him.
- 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 Technical Communicator turned novelist, learn about generating consistent documentation estimates, and the future of TechComm and where it's heading, just to name a few.... and I am working on a few webinars as well!
- 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](mailto:vicepresident@stc-orlando.org)

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

See you in August...

P.S. RSVP for August 16, 2011 at 6:30 pm Washlines XVII at the Winter Park Convention Center. Bring someone with you!!!

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## If You Missed Our Annual Leadership Day Meeting . . .



Michele Damron

By Michele Damron  
Secretary  
Orlando Chapter STC

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...you missed a brainstorming extravaganza in which our Administrative Council (AdCo) planned for the new year. Held July 16 in the conference room of Atkins (formerly PBSJ), the leadership retreat included 14 regular members and 4 student members. We brainstormed ideas, reported progress on current initiatives, and planned for an effective, innovative year.

Surprising us all in the midst of a working lunch, Kelli Pharo made a presentation to Laura Pooser of the UCF Foundation regarding the Melissa Pellegrin Scholarship. The Atkins press release provides the exciting details:

*The Atkins Foundation, Inc., has awarded a grant of \$3,000 to the UCF Foundation, Inc. in support of the STC-UCF Melissa Pellegrin Memorial Scholarship, an endowment established by the Orlando Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC). The STC endowment is managed by the philanthropic arm of the University of Central Florida (UCF), the UCF Foundation, Inc., in coordination with Orlando STC leadership.*

We are thrilled that Atkins has chosen to support the education of promising UCF Technical Communication students by granting this generous donation in memory of Melissa.

Ultimately, the day's discussions yielded several initiatives that are currently being pursued, or will be pursued, as the year continues:

- Merging our Orlando Chapter with the Space Tech chapter
- Refreshing our website with a new look and additional functionality
- Creating a new writing competition in conjunction with the Orlando Science

## Center's Regional Science Challenge

Orlando Chapter President Karen Lane reported that the merger of the Orlando Chapter with the Space Tech Chapter is almost complete. We plan to have at least one meeting a year in the Brevard county area to provide additional networking and educational opportunities for members in both geographical communities. Stay tuned for details!

Karen Lane and Jon Kessler (Webmaster and High School Writing Competition Chair) presented plans for a Chapter website renovation. Over the next couple of weeks we will be gathering ideas for what we need and want regarding both user interface and functionality. If YOU have thoughtful ideas on the website renovation that you would like to share, send them by August 6 to Michelle Llamas.

One of the most exciting proposals discussed at the meeting involves a new annual competition that would be held in conjunction with the Orlando Science Center's (OSC) Regional Science Challenge. We hope to offer finalists in OSC's contest a chance to write a paper summarizing their experience, telling us why they chose their particular project, what they learned, and the potential impact their project might have on others—in essence the "backstory" of their science project. For each of two divisions, we would award a \$100 cash prize to the first-place winners and a \$50 cash prize to the honorable mention recipients.

If you love science and would be interested in being a judge in this competition, keep your eyes on the monthly newsletters for more information. We are hopeful that this competition would help us expand STC Orlando's influence and outreach to local students who may one day enter the field of Technical Communication.

So if you missed our Leadership Day meeting, won't you let it be the last STC meeting you miss for this year? We would love to have your involvement and input as we go through the year. Come on out and join us!

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## Year Opening Meeting: Washlines XVII to Offer a "Gold Rush" of Information

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Dan Voss

By Dan Voss  
Coordinator  
Washlines XVII Mini Conference

*J'ever pan for informational gold?*

Ya'll'll have the opportunity to do so at the STC-Orlando chapter meeting at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, August 16, at the Winter Park Civic Center, in "California, There We Went," or, more formally, *Washlines XVII*.

As we speak, the nine venue hosts for this 17<sup>th</sup> incarnation of the chapter's traditional year-opening program are busily packaging information on a wide range of topics from sessions at STC's 58<sup>th</sup> annual international conference last

May into golden nuggets for information prospectors to pluck from the silty and gravelly tray with your panning screens that evening.

A number of the venue hosts will be offering a condensed version of sessions they presented in Sacramento; others will distill the golden essence of sessions they attended to share with you.

Either way, you'll be tapping into a mother lode of information in this "mini-conference" for a fraction of the cost of attending the full conference itself ... and at the price of gold these days, a bargain to be sure!

Don't miss *Washlines XVII*—the 17<sup>th</sup> edition of an epic that has passed down through the epochs from the Orlando chapter's tribal elders.

Look for more information, including the full mini-conference program, in the August edition of *Memo to Members*.

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## August 2011 STC Webinars

STC.org offers live webinars each Wednesday from 1:00–2:00 PM Eastern. Gather all your coworkers and tune in: pay per site, not per person.

Cost: Members \$79 each; Not Yet Members \$149 each, Student Member \$29 each. All payments done through PayPal.

Note: Cost is transferable but is not refundable.

Note: The webinar platform does not support Voice Over IP (VOIP) for Apple Macintosh system. Participants using Macintosh computers can access all other functions of the platform and use the 800 dial-in number instead of VOIP.

Here is the exciting lineup for August 2011:

Wednesday, 3 August | 1:00–2:00 PM EDT (GMT-4)

### TechComm 2020: Get Vision, Be Ready

Tristan Bishop

Communication is morphing at a dizzying rate. In some fields, technological advancements disintegrate job functions without warning. This presentation will use statistics to present a vision of the technical communication profession in 2020, and explain steps we can take today to be a part of that vision.

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Wednesday, 10 August 1:00–2:00 PM EDT (GMT-4)

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# Putting Your Best Font Forward

Michael Opsteegh

Learn to create documents, help, Web pages, and presentations that people actually want to read! This fast-paced presentation touches the fundamentals of graphic design, the key elements of typography, and the ethical implications that all technical communicators must know to create attractive and innovative materials.

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Wednesday, 17 August 1:00-2:00 PM EDT (GMT-4)

## Cut the Fluff (A Diet for Text-Bloated Docs)

Leah Guren

Are your documents too wordy? Do you go on and on and on before you get to the point? Maybe you need to learn how to cut the fluff! Learn the tricks to trimming without terror and cutting without qualms.

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Wednesday, 24 August 1:00-2:00 PM EDT (GMT-4)

## We Are All Content Strategists Now

Karen McGrane

Out of relative obscurity, content strategy has become the next big buzzword. Some say it fills a gap in our professional practices. Others argue it's just a different name for things we already do. In this session, the presenter will discuss why the Web needs content—and how technical communicators of every stripe can put content strategy to work on their projects.

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Wednesday, 31 August 1:00-2:00 PM EDT (GMT-4)

## HTML5: The Next Internet Gold Rush

Peter Lubbers

Peter Lubbers presents a behind-the-scenes look at HTML5 and how it differs from previous versions of HTML. Learn the vision and design principles behind HTML5 and how this will affect the TC field. You will see practical demonstrations of the different features of HTML5, including the new semantic markup. HTML5 is available in most modern browsers, but you will also learn how to make it work in older ones.

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