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FEATURE: Dallas Tech Pubs Departments Raided



Hopefully you were all able to attend the October STC LSC meeting. It was one of the most high-energy meetings I've

attended. I'd love to give all the credit to our fabulous speaker, Jack Molisani, but I think a large portion of the fun traveled here from Lubbock with our Texas Tech University guests.

Robert Macias, president of the [Texas Tech Student Chapter STC](#) organized a trip to Dallas for six of his classmates and one professor to attend our October chapter [more](#)

November 8: ITIL, The Application Lifecycle, ...



Perhaps you've heard of Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) and the application lifecycle. But what are they and what do they have to do with technical

writing?

Lorretta Morgan of Ryder Systems works daily with the whole range of application change management issues faced by large organizations including version control, release management, distribution of hotfixes, and handling requests for changes. Every change made by the enterprise requires meticulous documentation before, [more](#)

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Editor Corner

by [Jackie Damrau](#), Managing Editor

November brings many opportunities for us to be thankful. What are these opportunities?

- **Daylight Savings Time (Nov. 4).** In past years, the clocks have changed the last Sunday of October. Yet, George W. Bush signed the Energy Policy Act of 2005 that mandates we save energy by giving us one extra week in the fall to enjoy the daylight. I'm thankful that I get to run around the apartment changing all the clocks once again. Why? Because I get to get out those "poorly" written manuals to remember how to set the VCR and the digital answering machine.
- **Veterans Day (Nov. 11).** An American holiday to thank our military veterans and the civilians that served in World War I, World War II, and other wars for their contributions to our (the United States) national security. We also should reflect upon those that sacrificed their lives on our behalf. These men and women gave of themselves and their families on our behalf. Being the daughter of a retired military veteran, I'm thankful that I learned to honor, respect, and embrace the veterans that served to protect the freedom of our nation for all of us.

Internationally, you may celebrate this day as Remembrance Day (Australia, Canada, United Kingdom), Poppy Day (Malta, South Africa), or Armistice Day (France, New Zealand, many other Commonwealth countries). Thank a veteran for their service.

- **Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 22).** A traditional North American holiday in which we are thankful that the early Plymouth Colony settlers celebrated their first harvest in 1621 by sharing their food and praising their religious deities. The settlers shared their food with the Native Americans (Grand Sachem Massasoit and Wampanoag tribes) for their help in teaching the settlers how to make a living off the land.

Our Canadian friends celebrate Thanksgiving on the second Monday of October (Oct. 8, if you missed it) in much the same way that we do with the traditional meal of turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, potatoes, and that delicious dessert, pumpkin pie. The first Canadian Thanksgiving celebration was observed on April 15, 1872 as a celebration of the Prince of Wales's recovery from a serious illness. From 1872 to 1957, the day that Canada observed as its Thanksgiving day changed from October to November many times. In 1957, a proclamation was issued that permanently fixed Canada's Thanksgiving Day to be the second Monday in October.

I'm thankful that I have a wonderful family; a group of local STC members that I get to see once a month (if not more often) to share my experiences with and to learn from; and a group of international STC members that I may not see as often as my local friends, yet we can use online devices like e-mail, instant messenger, and Skype to stay in touch with each.

I'm also thankful for you, the readers of "Technically Write."

Letters to the Editor

Finally, I want to end this column by sharing the e-mails I received this past month. You all make this newsletter a joy to produce. Thank you!

I enjoyed Susie Fox's walk down memory lane immensely! I sometimes think of all the changes my grandmother experienced in her lifetime. She was born in 1908 and left us in 1994. When she was a youngster, it wasn't unusual to see horse-drawn carts on the road. I sometimes forget the changes that have

occurred in my lifetime are also pretty darn impressive. Thanks for reminding me, Susie! — *Jeanne Foster, STC LSC member since 2001*

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Fox Tales: Are You in Step with Your Style Guidelines?

by [Susie Lynn Fox](#), President



In our fashion-conscious marketplace where beauty sells products, are you on the cutting edge of style, or do you feel out of step with the latest fads? Luckily, technical communicators can feel at ease and in high fashion when they adopt and practice their own style.

Just like the classic dresser whose look is always in, technical communication professionals can put their best foot forward, too. How? They can agree on a standard style guide or two, use or develop industry- or company-specific style guidelines, and select a preferred dictionary.

However, some of us would rather go to charm school than to reveal our most deeply held beliefs about punctuation with others. On the plus side, navigating the emotional twists and turns of sharing and agreeing on style standards can also be entertaining and enlightening.

When technical communication professionals get together, they might compare their favorite and least favorite style guides, confess war stories about tried-and-true editing processes, and expound upon particular pet grammar peeves. So how can a diverse technical communication group diplomatically settle on some core standards that everyone can live by?

Newsletter Finds Its Style

Take a style hint from this year's Society for Technical Communication (STC) Lone Star Community (LSC) newsletter staff, led by Jackie Damrau, managing editor. The award-winning "Technically Write" newsletter staff, along with the Web and Public Relations teams have been exchanging ideas, comparing notes, and testing style guidelines for STC LSC.

The group got the ball rolling when they found an existing STC Office Style Guide, which they edited and expanded for use by STC LSC. After more discussion, the group adopted The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law as their first style guide choice and The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th Edition: The Essential Guide for Writers, Editors, and Publishers for their second choice. In addition, their preferred dictionary is the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary and Thesaurus.

Special thanks go to the pioneers who have participated throughout the process, including Jackie Damrau, Doug Dow, Jeanne Foster, Mel Haughton, Mike Hiatt, Mary McWilliams Johnson, Karl Morris, Alan Oak, Paula Robertson, Arroxane Ullman, and Monica Winkelman.

This style-conscious group has effectively set a cornerstone in place that will benefit STC LSC this year and in the future. With style standards in place, multi-talented STC LSC members can communicate a more consistent message to its members and to the public using the newsletter, Web site, press releases, IPIC announcements, and other communication vehicles.

Yet the question remains: Does this mean that STC LSC style standards are set in stone and cannot change now or in the future? No. Why? Because the English language is always changing, and technical communication professionals will adjust to emerging styles and trends along the way.

Susie's Favorite Style Guidelines

I don't know every style nuance this group has pondered so far, but it makes me think of some style standards that have proved invaluable to me daily throughout my career as a writer and editor. Just like the classic black dress or tuxedo, style classics can hang in your "wordrobe" for years to come only to be pulled out at a moment's notice for just the right occasion.

My favorites are largely influenced by my journalism education, work experience in various industries, and The Associated Press Stylebook, which is my first style guide choice. What are your favorites?

- **Month with or without a year.** Spell out a month if it is used with or without a year. For example: The party is in December. The pledge drive is in February 2008.
- **Month with a day and/or year.** Using applicable month abbreviations, abbreviate a month if it is used with a day and/or a year and set off the year with commas. For example: Nov. 8 is the next STC LSC meeting. Jan. 10, 2008, is the awards banquet. The last meeting will be in May 2008.
- **State without a city.** Spell out a state if it is used without a city. For example: Oklahoma is north of Texas.
- **State with a city.** Using applicable state abbreviations (not ZIP code designations), abbreviate a state if it is used with a city and set off the state with commas. For example: The STC conference will be in Philadelphia, Pa., this year. The conference was in Minneapolis, Minn., last year. The STC LSC meetings are in Addison, Texas.
- **Times.** Use figures except for noon and midnight, separate hours from minutes with a colon, and use preferred time listings of a.m. and p.m. For example: The meeting starts at 8 a.m. The lunch is at noon. The class ends at 5:30 p.m. The party is over at midnight.
- **Street without a numbered address.** Spell out a street name if there is no numbered address. For example: Carol lives on Melody Avenue.
- **Street with a numbered address.** Abbreviate only Ave., Blvd., and St. if there is a numbered address. For example: Carol moved to 1523 Symphony Blvd. Her grandma lives at 123 Orchestra Drive.

In Summary

To sum up, I've learned that a writer's golden words are not always pure gold and can usually be refined by an editor. More importantly, every editor and writer can polish the gold to a shine if they share common style standards.

Now I can't wait to see how the STC LSC newsletter editors edit this column! Go for it, team! You've got style now!

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November Meeting: ITIL, The Application Lifecycle, and Technical Communication with Lorretta Morgan

by [Jim Korth](#), PR Committee member



Perhaps you've heard of Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) and the application lifecycle. But what are they and what do they have to do with technical writing?

Lorretta Morgan of Ryder Systems will talk about "IT Application Lifecycle from a Change Management Perspective." She works daily with the whole range of application change management issues faced by large organizations including version control, release management, distribution of hotfixes, and handling requests for changes. Every change made by the enterprise requires meticulous documentation before, during, and after the change is rolled into production.

"Change affects every aspect of the software development lifecycle including documentation," Ms. Morgan said. "Managing change in the application lifecycle reduces documentation failure and is critical to successful IT service delivery." Ms. Morgan will discuss ITIL and IT acronyms at a high level, then explain the IT application lifecycle and relate it all to technical writing.

ITIL is a set of concepts and techniques for managing information technology infrastructure, development, and operations. Originally developed in the United Kingdom to foster structure for IT technical support and service activities, ITIL has now earned international recognition by the business process community and is widely accepted by most large enterprises.

"This session will introduce the basic concepts of the ITIL, IT service management, service delivery, the standards for IT implementation, and ATLAS™" (an ITIL deployment tool). According to Ms. Morgan, "Beyond a basic understanding of the concepts and terminology, you

Details

Thursday, Nov. 8, 2007, 6:15 to 8:00 p.m.

Crowne Plaza Hotel North Dallas-Addison
14315 Midway Road
Addison, Texas

Directions: http://www.stc-dfw.org/pages/meet_monthly.htm#locations

Reservations (Reservations made after 5pm on Nov. 5 are subject to a \$5 penalty)
[Click to register for the meeting now!](#)

Dinner (with reservations):

- \$20 STC members / Students with student ID
- \$25 non-members

Program Only Attendance (with reservations):

- \$5 for STC
\$10 for non-members
- **FREE** for students with valid student ID

will receive links to valuable resources and learn where to obtain further information. From decrypting acronyms to demystifying the IT application lifecycle, this discussion will show the relationship between change management and technical communication.”

Lorretta Morgan has more than 30 years of IT experience including operations, programming, building and deploying systems, and supporting transportation management and warehousing applications. She came to Ryder as Senior Systems Administrator and progressed to change and version control management. Ms. Morgan has supervised change control processes at Ryder for over six years, supporting customers like Philips Electronics, Lucent, Cisco, and Applied Materials. Lorretta Morgan is ITIL certified for both “Foundations” and “Release, Configuration and Change Management.”

October Meeting Review: Build a Portfolio and Ace the Interview (Jack Molisani)

by [Jim Korth](#), PR Committee member

Have you ever interviewed for a position you didn’t get? Perhaps you didn’t make full value of your portfolio as a tool to drive the interview.

Veteran writer and interviewing expert Jack Molisani has developed a methodology to use with prospective employers that lets candidates clearly distinguish themselves and their work from competing candidates. Mr. Molisani was the featured speaker at the STC Lone Star Community’s October meeting speaking on “Portfolios and Interview Strategies: How to Ace a Tech Communications Job Interview.”



Jack’s 4-Step Methodology

The four steps of Jack’s methodology include:

- Establish that you are a professional in your field
- Ensure that the interviewer knows you know what you are talking about
- Show that you really have done what you say you have
- Show how you can solve the problems they are experiencing

In an informative and entertaining hour, Jack showed how these steps translate in the heat of the interview to, “I am an expert, I really have done what I claim, I can do the same for you and I can show how it adds value to your business.”

Building Your Portfolio

Jack is a strong advocate for making the portfolio a central part of the interview. “People believe what they see, not what they’re told,” he said. People also remember what they see more vividly than what they hear. Images appeal to people at a visceral level. Telling a story is good, yet showing an example is better.

Jack recommends buying a nice leather (or faux leather) artist’s portfolio. Use clear, non-glare paper protectors and add tabs for each section. Whether to label the tabs depends on how you plan to use the portfolio. Don’t let the prospective employer “scan” your portfolio. Remember, you’re walking him or her down a “path of understanding.”

The portfolio should be built around a project you were closely involved in from beginning to end. It will need a project plan, project description, consideration of styles and standards, content and schedule, and, finally, samples.

The project plan, which Jack feels is the most critical part of the portfolio, starts with a purpose or objective of the plan. Your portfolio should include terms and abbreviations, change history, and anticipated changes. The project plan should include risks and issues. (A risk is anything that could impact the project cost or schedule. An issue is something that just needs to be decided.) The project description starts with the title, purpose of the document, audience, and scope. It also includes prerequisites, cross references, estimated length, and distribution media.

You need to decide whether to use an existing style guide or go with a new style. Using existing or new templates, using color or black and white media, and the choice of authoring tools are additional considerations. You will also need a detailed content outline and a proposed schedule. Remember to adjust for holidays and vacations. Jack urged triage-type deliberations when budgeting available time and money.

The samples come last and they should be a visible result of the document plan. By the time Jack gets to this point, the interviewer already knows that Jack knows what he's talking about. He doesn't want them to see the samples until he is ready. He usually waits until the end to let the interviewer see any of the samples or even touch the portfolio.

If the project plan has been presented properly, showing the samples can be a "cathartic" moment for the interviewer, Jack said. The interviewer will often hit the go button at that moment, asking for the bill rate or if the candidate can return for a second interview. This is the cycle moving forward and indicates you have aced the interview.

Acing the Interview

Jack recommends approaching the interview as follows:

- Understand the job requirements
- Use your portfolio to guide the interview exactly where you want it to go
- Move the cycle forward to the next step: getting a second interview or a job offer

Understanding the job requirements means asking the interviewer exactly what they're looking for so you'll know how to respond. You're interviewing them as much as they're interviewing you. You'll never know what they're looking for unless you ask. Their answers to your questions will help you determine if and how you will show your portfolio.

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October Workshop Review: UPA-STC “Design Thinking 2007”

by [Jackie Damrau](#), STC Associate Fellow, and [Elisa Miller](#), LSC 1st Vice President

A great, innovative idea is no guarantor of success. Forrester Research reported that business leaders can no longer differentiate their service or product through price, features, selection, or brand. Today, customers want greater access to information through the use of the Web, mobile devices, and emails to transact their business. This interaction requires businesses to consider the “interactive experience of its target audience to remain competitive, grow revenue, and increase brand loyalty” (Usability Sciences, 2007, www.usabilitysciences.com/design-thinking-2007).



In what we hope will be the first of an annual event, the local chapters of the Usability Professionals’ Association (UPA) and the Lone Star Community (LSC) of Society for Technical Communication (STC) worked together to produce the first “Design Thinking” workshop on October 19, 2007. The UPA program co-chairs asked LSC to co-host the event since we have direct experience producing workshops and regional conferences of this type. The LSC representatives were [Elisa Miller](#), 1st Vice President, and [Jackie Damrau](#), Managing Newsletter Editor and Education Manager.

To start off, I’d like to define “design thinking”—it is to move thinking away from the traditional—relying on inductive and deductive reasoning—to embracing the “abductive” reasoning skills in continually discovering and leveraging new and better solutions, resources, and methods by opening up a highly collaborative dialog with the target audience and peers.

Keynote: Chris Bernard – Design Thinking: Door to Actionable Innovation

Chris Bernard is a bit of an odd duck at Microsoft. He works with the software design, development and business domains to communicate Microsoft’s position on the importance of user experience in software design—and he is based in Chicago, not Redmond. During his presentation, Chris shared that the business methods for designing software and Web sites are broken. He explained that we need to keep up with the trends and innovative ideas for leading businesses to new highly compatible companies. The economics of software are changing, thus causing a disturbance in how we design and create software and Web sites.



Chris talked about how some businesses build the user interface (UI) after the application or Web site has been architected, which is nothing more than “pushing icing on the cake.” What he is referring to is that you can make the application or the Web site pretty, yet it does not fix the fundamental problem -- that software was not designed for the target audience.

Design thinking involves user research, UI design, design planning, information design, and usability testing.

The conclusion of Chris’s keynote left us with four concepts to think about: function (make it work well), aesthetics (make it look great), interaction (understand the context), and process or story (generate memories with an emotional connection).

Afternoon Sessions

The next two sessions covered “Hidden Entrances” (Stephen Anderson from Sabre) and “Hesitant Exits” (Jackie Damrau, STC). Stephen talked about how design is an ever important engine of corporate profit and is both an outcome (things we see) as well as part of a process (looking at the whole system). Jackie talked about how our careers as technical communication professionals or usability design professionals are quickly changing as new technology emerges. We must have a passion for continuing our education on our own to keep ourselves employable in the field that we enjoy the most.

The next session was a panel discussion where several local industry professionals talked about how their organizations are changing and why. Panel speakers included two local UPA officers and representatives from Nokia, Hotels.com, EDS, IMC², and Usability Sciences. The message from this session was that businesses need to move away from reactive thinking and more towards revolutionary, proactive thinking to meet the needs of their target audiences. As professionals in this space, we need to maintain broad knowledge in the areas of user-centered design, information analysis/architecture, information design, and user research methods.

Evening Sessions

The afternoon sessions ended with a lavish spread of hors d'oeuvres sponsored by IMC² (catered by Breadwinners Café and Bakery). After everyone was plentifully stuffed, we scattered into individual evening workshops on topics like:

- *The Reading Corner* hosted by Garrett Dimon and Adam Polansky who held open discussions about books that inspire the field of Design Thinking.
- *Silverlight* (Chris Bernard) helped attendees 1) learn how the intersection of design and technology is fundamentally changing how professional disciplines work together when creating digital experiences and rich Web applications, and 2) gain in-depth perspectives on next generation concepts and platforms to enable enterprise and consumer experiences.
- *Influencing Change Through Presentations* (Travis Isaacs) helped attendees see how a well designed presentation can be an invaluable tool for telling your story, incubating ideas, and making change in your organization.
- *Windows Help Files: looking Back, Moving Forward...* (Darice Lang, STC) helped attendees take a quick look at the history of Windows help files, the structure of a Windows help file, and then I will share tips and tricks for creating and maintaining Windows help files. No computers are required for this class. Information about help files will not be directed to a specific help generation tool; it is simply informational about help files in general.



- *FrameMaker Tips and Stuff I Found Useful* (Mike Hiatt, STC) helped attendees learn tips and tricks that Mike learned over the years (and last week) about using Frame as well as some methodologies he developed for creating and managing documents with shared content. Mike also provided information on some plug-ins for Frame that he found useful over the last ten years of using Frame, as well as provided suggestions for looking for additional plug-ins.

- *Axure: Design by Example* (Kelly Rader/Hank Henry) provided attendees with a hands-on experience using this prototyping application.

Other Activities

IMC², the facility host, provided a walk-about tour of their company. It is very Google-ish in that cubes are made of raw wood (not the traditional modular gray cube walls) with unusual conference room names, zen rooms, Wii rooms, and even an upside-down room.

LSC hosted the bookstore with the books covering topics on usability design and technical communication. The bookstore was staffed by Jackie's parents and daughter-in-law, who did an excellent job in selling books.



Conclusion

The event was successful and opened the doors to new ways of thinking about my own approach to my technical work. Designing and delivering technical content requires a special trait in knowing how to get the right information to the right people in a way that they can understand and perform their job.

*All photos in this article are courtesy of Lou Capone, IMC² host.

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FEATURE: Dallas Area Tech Pubs Departments Get Raided

by Heather Steele, LSC 2nd Vice President



Hopefully you were all able to attend the October STC LSC meeting. It was one of the most high-energy meetings I've attended. I'd love to give all the credit to our fabulous speaker, Jack Molisani, but I think a large portion of the fun traveled here from Lubbock with our Texas Tech University guests.

Robert Macias, president of the [Texas Tech Student Chapter STC](#) organized a trip to Dallas for six of his classmates and one professor to attend our October chapter meeting. He asked us if they could visit a few technical writers while they were here, so we all pulled together to organize a set of tours at Advanced Data Exchange (ADX), T-Mobile, and CA (formerly Computer Associates).

Students Tour Dallas starting with ADX (Addison)

The group of Red Raiders started their day with my coworkers and me at [ADX](#). We showed them around our office and treated them to donuts and sodas over a presentation about ADX, our internship program, and our Technical Writing Department. In light of Jack's presentation about portfolios and interview skills, we wanted to stress to the students how important an internship can be to their professional development. Mike Nilsson, the Manager of eCommerce Operations offered his insight:

"I look at Internship programs like buying a car... you wouldn't buy one without test-driving it first. The Internship program gives both the Intern and the Company a 'no-strings attached' way to make sure that it's a great fit for both parties. It truly is a 'Win/Win' scenario."

During their time at ADX, the students also had a chance to view and discuss the projects I am in charge of as the Technical Writer, and to learn more about the world of a Lone Writer.

We were very impressed with the intelligent questions the students asked and their eagerness to learn more about our business. Above all we were impressed with their professor, Ken Baake, for escorting them all the way to Dallas for the event. We try to work closely with local universities to fill our internship positions and educate students, but universities and professors don't always cooperate. After the visit, Karen Hicks, Training Supervisor at ADX, said:

"I really enjoyed having students come visit the office. I think it's great that a University would care enough about their students to take them on a field trip that assists them with acquiring work once they have graduated. Additionally, it's wonderful that they were able to visit different companies to get the big picture of how a technical writer works in different environments."

Moving further north to T-Mobile (Frisco)

After their ADX visit, the students ventured up the Dallas North Tollway to see Jackie Damrau at [T-Mobile](#). Jackie welcomed the students and had Will Smith, a Wi-Fi Engineering manager, talk with the students about working in the telecommunications field and the type of information that they need to know to work in this field. The students talked with Jackie about what she does with T-Mobile HotSpot where she shared with them how her job crosses over four different groups: Enterprise Architecture, Release Management, Quality Assurance, and Business Analysis. The students were then taken on a tour of the Network Operations Center, which Jackie said "their eyes were opened...and they learned the real meaning behind 'technical'," followed by a tour of the Technical Customer Call Center. Dr. Baake and Robert Macias talked to Jackie about visiting Lubbock to speak more to the group about what she does at T-mobile.

Heading down south a bit to CA (Plano)

The students finished their stay in Dallas with a lunch and tour at [CA](#) with Michael Milliken, Manager of Technical Publications. The students had the opportunity to eat lunch in the CA cafeteria and tour their Plano facility. Michael put together a presentation about CA's very large, international Technical Publications department. He talked to the students about the importance of structured authoring and working on teams spread around the world, and compared the benefits of working as a contractor to working as a full-time employee. (CA uses a combination of full-time and contracted writers.) Before the students left the office, Michael introduced them to many on-site writers ranging from the newest writer who has been with CA only a few months to writers who have been with the organization for upwards of 20 years. Michael said, "The enthusiasm and freshness of the students looking at technical writing as a career was very refreshing."

Conclusion

The Texas Tech students and their hosts were all overwhelmingly pleased with the experience of the tours.

We are hoping to continue organizing office tours and presentations for local universities. Contact [Heather Steele](#), STC LSC 2nd Vice President, if you are interested in hosting students at your office for a tour.

UNT Student Articles

LSC in the Community: More Than a Technical Writing Society

by Michelle LeBlanc, UNT student

The STC Lone Star Community (LSC) members unite in their knowledge and passion for communication through corporate advertising, writing, and design. However, this chapter does more than hide in the literary aspects of a community. To get a better perspective on LSC's many endeavors, I met with Community Service manager, Kathryn Poe, to discuss how LSC's presence affects the Dallas/Fort Worth community.

A Background

[Kathryn Poe](#) graduated from the University of North Texas with a bachelor's degree in Radio/Television/Film and a minor in English. She began her career in the Technical Writing field 14 years ago and joined the STC 10 years ago. Community Service manager is far from the only title Poe has taken. In fact, over her 10-year period with LSC, Poe has held the positions of President, First Vice President, Public Relations Coordinator, and Newsletter Editor. This year Poe received the rank of Associate Fellow at the STC Annual Conference. With such experiences backing her, Poe set out to head the LSC community service aspects and further expand this organization's outreach opportunities.



A Mission

A lack of organizations to work with has never become an issue since the groups needing assistance from organizations like LSC far outnumber the groups available to help. This can become difficult for one to choose which organization will most benefit from the services LSC can provide. Poe does not focus on this aspect, however. Instead, she remarked that LSC chooses the groups to service based on need and accessibility.

Last year, Poe headed an effort to aid students in New Orleans (NOLA) after Hurricane Katrina plowed through residents' lives. Poe spoke with an art teacher who struggled to teach art to kids still recovering from the hurricane. However, the art teacher lacked art supplies since supplies were not first priority, so LSC stepped in to help. With the help of Poe and the rest of LSC, the students in New Orleans received two huge boxes of supplies in what was described by the art teacher as being "just like Christmas."

Events and responses like these fuel community service initiatives where the volunteers become especially involved in hands-on work. The Salvation Army, NOLA, and many other organizations have become well aware of LSC through their extensive community outreach projects. Kathryn Poe commented, "While the drives are easier for much of the membership to participate in, the [Salvation Army] Angel Tree [Warehouse] is a favorite." The Angel Tree Warehouse links the Christmas donations received by the Salvation Army to families in need across the DFW metroplex. "Most of us work at desks all day so strenuous activities like moving, sorting, and packing donations are good for the body and the soul. Everyone who has ever participated has felt like it was a great experience."

A Future

Poe and the LSC members have many possible volunteer opportunities; some of which have been previously initiated, while others remain in the planning stages. The possibility of LSC providing assistance through book drives and supply donations to a NOLA High School library represents one such event that Poe currently has in the planning stages and hopes to fully initiate in the near future.

Technical Communication in Science

by David Wilcocks, UNT student

Fields of science have always revolved around effective participation and conveyance of ideas. These are two key elements of innovation, and are essential for success in any progressive field. Unfortunately, even today a shortfall exists in effective communication worldwide, as there always has been.

Following the development of the scientific method in the early seventeenth century by René Descartes, the biggest problem facing science was not the means used to collect data, it was finding a way to portray the new data as exactly that. Galileo Galilei experienced firsthand that presenting the sun, not the earth, as the center of the solar system in the wrong manner will only get you as far as admonished and labeled a heretic.

Today, the ramifications of how we share ideas are not as personally detrimental as they were in the early 1600s, but they do impose a great significance on the speed and direction of development.

In 2002, a three-day workshop held on the island of Tobago, hosted by the Caribbean Academy of Sciences, developed a series of necessary implementations to better the communication of science. The following is a condensed list of key points [SciDev.Net](#) and the [InterAcademy Panel](#) devised to put science and development back on track:

- **Capacity Building:** developing communication skills for scientists, professional skills for public information officers, and comparable skills for journalists interested in writing about science
- **Developing fields of science journalism** should take a scientific approach and portray issues that impact growing nations, such as fields of health, environment, agriculture and food production, and energy.
- **Increasing the number of professional journalists** who are able to write knowledgably and accurately about science.
- **Convincing newspapers and magazines to allocate more space** to articles highlighting current developments and the impact various fields of science are creating in communities.
- **Making scientists more available to journalists** to more accurately spread information on work they are doing and to increase their overall accountability in the public's opinion.

These points are all good general starting points that should serve as guidelines in development as well as an illustration of how crucial communication is to progress. They are universal and are, therefore, applicable to any progressive field where exchanging technical ideas is of significance to the expansion of that field.

Why English Scholars Rule the World

by Anonymous, UNT student

Every day I am reminded how stupid the world can really be, especially those of us who are not English Scholars!!!!!! (Punctuation Error)

Let me tell you why! I have an English 4180 Technical Writing class. The first day was great, until the teacher realized she was dealing with a bunch of Biology majors. Her heart dropped! So did mine. Because at that moment, I realized I was nothing compared to an English scholar. I was a loser because my grammar would suck and my choice of words would be too wordy for the average reader, and I would use run on sentences just to prove a point that I could sum up in maybe just three words.

By not being an English scholar, when it comes to writing papers, I will make the wrong decisions about punctuation, word choice, tense, and even the setting of my margins. But in this world of a bunch of illiterate fools who don't understand the confounds of the English language, we are forced to learn from English men who strive to tell why this sentence doesn't make sense or why we should not use a preposition at the beginning of a sentence or a dangling modifier in place of an action verb. (I am not even sure if that is right.)

To be honest, I will never understand any of this. That's why I believe we should salute our English scholars with the Medal of Honor or something, maybe even a Nobel Peace Prize, better yet, an Oscar, because nobody can act like they know the English language better than they or maybe me. These scholars may never receive any of the prestigious awards, but they are great, and that's why I LOVE THEM!!!!!!!!!!

Sincerely, the Punctuation Error

Networking in Your 20s, 30s, and 40s

by Sarah Hilton, UNT student

Searching for a job can be exhausting, especially in today's competitive world. Skills and education no longer set a person apart from others. In the end, who you know gives you a competitive edge. Networking allows doors to open for people who know someone in the field. Networking comes in different styles for people in their 20's, 30's and 40's.

If you are fresh out of college, the business world is daunting. Your priority is finding the perfect job, well any job that will pay the bills. Networking helps ease some of the stress. Knowing people in the field helps you get your foot in the door. Once in a job, making connections is a must. These mentors can help with almost any situation you encounter. They have the experience and would love to give the new generation some advice. Often if you are in a bind, they will step up for you. Networking opens channels you may not know existed. Special projects, group meetings, and new friends in a new world are just some of the benefits of networking in your 20's.

After you have been in the job for a while and have made connections and acquired mentors, networking takes on a new role. In your 30's, you will find networking helps to enhance your career. After proving yourself in the workforce, people will notice, and job opportunities will arise. Mentors who have worked with you will mention you when a position opens. Your ideal job, more than likely, requires experience in the field. Now that you have that experience, you can use networking to position yourself for a job better than your current one. Networking brings

you clients. When you have new clients who are being sent by a reliable source, and they want services immediately, it helps you focus on making your product better.

Now that you are in the job you envisioned for yourself, it is time for you to return the favor. When you are 40+, you become the mentor. You help a new employee feel at home and make friends. You are the connection-maker. As your retirement nears, networking will come in handy once again. Retirement today does not mean going home and knitting. People leave their jobs and begin consulting. Networking, just as in the past, can help you to find these consulting jobs, or people who would love to use your services every once in a while. Networking will forever help put people in jobs that they desire. Networking should become second nature to anyone who wishes to get ahead in the field.

Software Review: Beef Up Your Web Site's Search Rating

by Heather Steele, Member

I've recently taken on the role of Web Site Administrator for my company, and I wanted to learn more about how to drive searchers on the Web to our site.

Part of my research included visiting the [Dallas/Fort Worth Search Engine Marketing Association](#)'s quarterly meeting on October 15th. The presentation topic was "51 Essential SEM Tools You Can Use," which is exactly the information they gave us. The night was a rapid-fire explanation of 51 (mostly free) tools everyone can use to learn more about their Web sites.

I wanted to share this list of tools with you all. Take some time to check them out. An hour of poking around with the reporting tools showed me more about our Web site than I had learned after months of being the Administrator.

DFW SEM Association 51 Essential SEM Tools

Tool	Function	Price
SEO Digger www.seodigger.com	Ranking report tool, shows common search terms for your site	Free
Touch Graph www.touchgraph.com	Provides visual link maps	Free
Yahoo! Site Explorer	Shows back links and indexed pages for your site	Free
Aaron Wall's SEO Tool Bar tools.seobook.com/firefox/seo-for-firefox.html	Works through Firefox has multiple tools built in	Free
Trellian's Keyword Discovery www.keyworddiscovery.com	Provides keywords and brainstorming tools using real data from popular search engines	\$69.95/mo.
We Build Pages' Toolset	Back link and anchor text tools Keyword frequency tool Spider viewer	Free

Tool	Function	Price
Deep Link Ratio Checker	Shows deep link ration of a site: inbound hits not to home page	Free
Web Confs webconfs.com/	Checks keyword density Creates tag clouds	Free
VeriClix www.vericlix.com/	Pay-per-click reporting Auditing tools Fraud monitoring	Free
Data Center Search Tool seocritique.com/datacentertool/	Provides Google search results across data	Free
Google Website Optimizer services.google.com/websoptimizer/	Tool through adwords testing tool	free
Google Adwords Editor	Easy way to update your adwords for Google	Free
Web Position 4	Checks natural search engine rankings	\$149/ 5 domains
Agent Web Ranking	Similar to Web Position 4	
OptiLink	Checks natural search engine rankings	
Advanced web ranking advancedwebranking.com/	Mimics a user as it checks natural search engine rankings	\$99–399
Advanced Link Manager advancedlinkmanager.com/	Shows how links evolve over time Lets you compare your site to competitors	\$59–149
Combinewords.com combinewords.com/	Keyword list expansion tool	Free
Poodle Predictor Gritechnologies.com/tools/spider.go	Shows what your site will look like in a live search engine result	Free
Server Header Checkers www.webrankinfo.com/	Checks URLs and redirects	Free
SEO Quake www.seoquake.com	Provides search engine parameters (Back links, Indexed Pages, Alexa rank) Lets you download search engine parameters into Excel	Free
Overture's Keyword Selector Tool inventory.overture.com/d/searchinventory/suggestion/	Provides popularity numbers from Yahoo Brainstorming tool	Free

Tool	Function	Price
Hitwise.com hitwise.com	Competitive insights on keywords	\$60,000/yr
WordTracker.com WordTracker.com	Provides new keyword ideas	\$299/yr
Microsoft adCenter Tools adlab.microsoft.com	Toolbox of advertising and keyword tools Learn more about user intent behind keywords	Free
Quintera.com quintera.com/	Visual search engine tool	Free
Google Cheat Sheet	Reference guide to Google search products	Free
Google Site Map Generator www.xml-sitemaps.com/index.php	Spiders your site and creates an XML site map Automatically updates based on parameters you set	Free
Market Leap marketleap.com/siteindex/default.htm	Back link checking tool Search engine saturation reports	Free
Archive.org www.archive.org/index.php	Historical Web page archive View your Web page from 10 years ago	Free
W3 Code Validator webxact2.watchfire.com/report.asp	Checks your code for errors	Free
Isapi rewrite	Rewrites URLs to be search engine friendly	
Joost de Valk's non-personalized results plugin		
Page Rank Bot www.seo4fun.com/php/pagerankbot.php	Provides site-wide page rank filtration More control over internal distribution	Free
Google Toolbar	Checks page rank Keyword highlighting tool	Free
Google Webmaster Central www.google.com/webmasters	Many tools for checking your site	Free
Google Analytics www.google.com/analytics/	Tracks where visitors come from and how they interact with your site Some privacy issues with this tool	Free
Google Base base.google.com/	Helps searches find what you sell	Free

Tool	Function	Price
Ranks.nl ranks.nl/	Shows side-by-side Web site rankings	Free
Google Traffic Estimator adwords.google.com/select/trafficestimatorsandbox	Traffic estimates of keywords Gives quick ballpark numbers	Free
Google Adwords Keyword Tool adwords.google.com/select/Login	Keyword ideas Brainstorming tool	Free
Google Suggests (Included in Google toolbar)	Brainstorming tool	Free
Yahoo search assist (Included in Yahoo toolbar)	Brainstorming tool	Free
Click Tracks Clicktracks.com	Search analytics tool	79/mo. and up
Leadmaverick.com leadmaverick.com/	Full analytics Lead generation Great for local business Lets small business quickly create optimized Web sites	Free to certified re-sellers
Bruce Clay SE Relationship Chart www.bruceclay.com/searchenginechart.pdf	Visual diagram of SE distribution relationships	Free
CrazyEgg.com crazyegg.com/	Landing page design tool	Free
Aspin.com aspin.com/	Keyword analyzer	Free

You Google, but do you iGoogle?

by [Louellen S. Coker](#), Senior Member

Google, for all its search engine fire power, has come a little late to personalization of the user's Web experience. Late though it was, iGoogle offers its users the potential for an ever-expanding personalization of their Web experience.

The concept for iGoogle came about, partly through Google's acquisition of Sep Kamvar's search company (Kaltix) in 2003. His theories and the technology he brought to Google are the core of its personalization efforts. Kamvar is now Google's Personalization Technical Lead.

In 2004, Google's VP of Search Products & User Experience, Marissa Mayer, challenged her department to create a mock-up of what they thought Google would look like two years out. By May 2005, users had the option of using Google IG. Earlier this year, iGoogle became the Google personalized Web page.

Greg Sterling, quoted Mayer in his [May 2007 entry](#) in the Search Engine Land blog, when she characterized Google personalization as “one of the biggest relevance advances in the past few years.” She added that “personalization doesn’t affect all results, but when it does it makes results dramatically better.”

To receive optimum personalization—even down to the results of search query—the user must be logged in. Once logged in, users can enjoy localized searches and turn a generic home page into something that is pretty cool.

I discovered iGoogle almost by accident when doing some Search Engine Optimization training on www.lynda.com. You can find it by browsing to www.google.com and clicking on the iGoogle link in the upper right corner of the page (Figure 1).

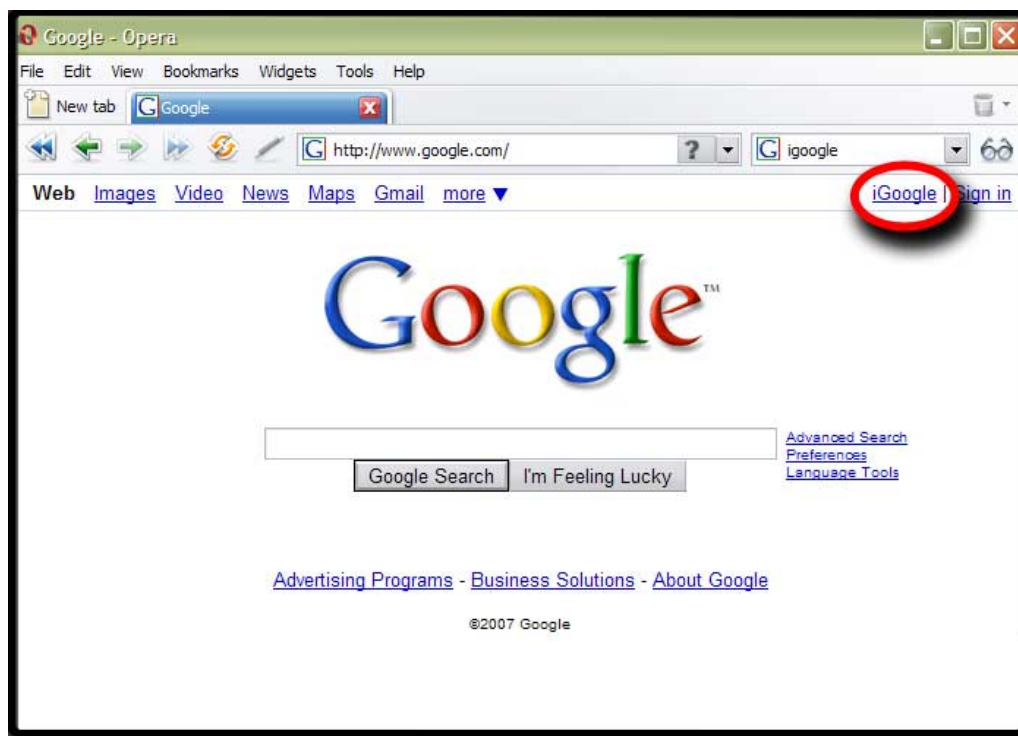


Figure 1. Google Home page

Once I got set up, it didn’t take me long to latch on to all the cool aspects of personalizing my Web experience! And I have to say, I’ve accumulated a group of gadgets and tabbed pages that make my work life easier. The theme I have on my primary tab, has just enough whimsy to make me smile regardless of the stress factors that are floating around me. Here’s what my iGoogle page (Figure 2) looks like as I write:



Figure 2. iGoogle Home page

I've been able to speed up my work processes tremendously, and the community possibilities have helped to solve some of the collaboration difficulties we've had in my office. In fact, it was so helpful that my husband's office now uses it. To follow is how iGoogle works for me. The cool thing about iGoogle is that your experience will be as unique as you are.

1. Personalized Themes and Tabs

iGoogle offers six themes that change throughout the day and night. As you can see, from the screen shot, I should be getting ready to go to bed. In about half an hour, my little buddies will be eating s'mores. Their activities even change based on my local weather! (I can't wait to see them in a snowball fight!)

A little more practical, I really enjoy being able to set up as many tabs as I want and load them up with different gadgets that I want or need. I can arrange them in any order that I want and go back and forth as I feel the need. Minimize and optimize as I choose.

2. Google Bookmarks

Just as many of you, I have a long list of favorite Web sites that I go to for work and for fun. As a Web developer, I'm constantly switching from one browser to another throughout the day. I must say, it's pretty near impossible to have all my Favorites updated in every browser. The Google bookmark gadget lets me not only collect my Favorites, it also lets me specify keywords, so my favorite will show up in more than one place. For example, [Brickhouse Gym](#), a site I developed as well as where I work out, shows up in my "Client Sites" and "Workout" categories. The best thing, all my Favorites are available no matter what browser or computer I'm using anywhere in the world.

3. Google Reader

I struggle with WAY too many emails every day, and signing up to be notified by e-mail of sites I want to keep up with, is well, pretty daunting. I forget to go to the RSS feed pages and get so far behind on what's new that I give up. With Google reader, I get the headline of all the blogs I've signed up for, and when I hover over it with my mouse, it pops up with either a preview or the full copy. I can decide from there what I want to do. It's great! I don't forget about the blogs, and

I can quickly go through them. And better yet, I don't get e-mail reminders to go look at a new blog posting!

4. Google Talk and Sticky Note

I've got my instant messenger up any time I'm logged in. And if I need to leave myself a note about something, I just key it in.

5. Local Weather

There's not much to say about this, as it's pretty self-explanatory. I can keep up with the weather anywhere. Asking about the weather at my client's locale does seem to break the ice from time to time, and when getting ready to travel, I know what to pack.

6. Google Notebook

Google notebook vies for top honors in my world with bookmarks and a reader. I've got several different notebooks that I keep notes in. The best thing about it is that I share one with my husband, which helps us keep up with each other. I share another with my girlfriends. And, the big winner, I share one with everyone in my office where we can keep each other updated on our different projects. When I'm out of the office, I can go straight there to answer questions without having to wade through hundreds of e-mail.

7. Google Docs

I discovered this feature out of necessity. I had a client who was traveling and was unable to get Internet connectivity. As fate would have it, we were close to a deadline and sharing files was a necessity. Through Google docs, I was able to upload my Word and Excel files, and then invite her to share them with me. She was the only one who could see them, and we were able to do our edits in a timely manner. That feature kept the project on track. While it's not the BEST way to collaborate, I will say it sure is an excellent contingency plan, and I will definitely keep that little trick up my sleeve.

I have no doubt that I could wax on indefinitely about how cool iGoogle is, but just as I promised earlier, it's time for me to go have some s'mores!

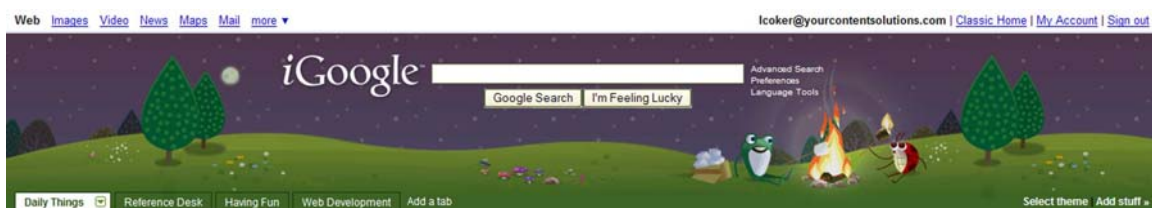


Figure 3. Google Screen at night

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LSC Notes and Committee Reports**From Our Bylaws...**

by [Mike Hiatt](#), Parliamentarian

Management of the Society for Technical Communications, Lone Star Community is given to the Administrative Council, which is commonly referred to as the “council” in community documents. Its members are the only voting members of the community and includes the president, first vice president, second vice president, secretary, treasurer, parliamentarian, and immediate past president.

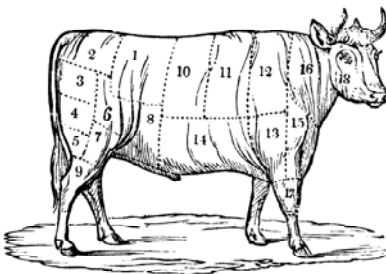
The Administrative Council usually meets with as many committee managers (public relations, scholarships, job bank, etc.) as possible at their monthly meetings to keep the chapter running smoothly. Input from all committee managers is vital for the council to make informed decisions about the community. The group comprised of the council and the committee managers is often referred to as the “admin council.”

LSC Competitions Are On the Mooove!

by [Kathryn Poe](#), Competitions Manager

The competition entries have arrived at last! Competition Managers Louellen Coker (Technical Publications), Diane Mazzarella (Online), and I (Technical Art) want to thank you all for your enthusiasm. Maybe it was the cow. He is very popular of late.

Judging has started! No Bull!



Cow design used with permission of the STC Phoenix Chapter

We received 27 Tech Pubs, 18 Online, and 3 Tech Art entries. Your hard work is being distributed to our judges as I type, so the best is yet to come. Remember that the Awards Banquet is Thursday, January 10; so stay tuned!

Mentor Committee

by [Ann Balaban](#), Associate Fellow and Manager, Mentoring Committee

Early in their careers, technical communicators in corporate environments often find that technical writing is perhaps the easiest and quickest of the many tasks they perform.

Probably the most difficult, time-consuming chore they face is locating the information needed to perform the writing task. First, the writer needs to find the person with the required knowledge and then find the right way to interact successfully with this individual while navigating within corporate cultures and politics.

How do new technical communicators find the best mentors to help them solve these problems? One way is to take advantage of the Mentoring program from the STC Lone Star community. As a new technical communicator or as a student in technical communication, you have valuable resources available to you through STC.

Research literature shows that mentors provide vocational and psychosocial support to protégés. One researcher found a link between these functions and the career mobility of protégés. Research also shows that technical communicators have relatively high job satisfaction, but that their corporate mobility and career development is relatively low. Mentors can help technical communicators become aware of additional avenues for career advancement because they often know what is required for other positions and how to prepare for assuming them.

Having a mentor can improve your skills in organizational communication and management, as well as increase your overall productivity and job satisfaction.

Resources:

1. Henrietta N. Shirk and Howard T. Smith, "Developing Effective Mentorships for Technical Communicators," STC 1994 Annual Conference Proceedings.
2. Gordon, Thomas, *Leadership Effectiveness Training*, Wyden, New York, 1974.

Why Mentoring Matters

STC is always looking for new leaders. One way to locate and retain our next generation of leaders is by mentoring.

Mentoring can help STC develop new leaders while enhancing your career development and improving your technical knowledge. Besides all these great benefits, it really improves your self-esteem! The mentor's growth occurs right along with the protégé's.

The purpose for mentoring is to encourage growth of a less experienced person in their profession and within STC. Your experiences learning about and working with others qualifies you to be a mentor. If you had a mentor when you were starting out, imagine what a difference it would have made—if only I knew then what I know now! This is your chance to share your experiences, your enthusiasm for your work, and your interests with someone just starting out in technical communication.

In a mentoring relationship, the mentor and protégé:

- Identify objectives, goals, and development needs
- Define and establish a plan to accomplish goals
- Meet regularly in person, by phone, or through e-mail to review and evaluate progress

Mentoring is all-inclusive—no one is excluded who wants to participate. You do not have to be a student to be a protégé. Whether you are new to technical communication—just starting out or making a career change—or you have been a technical communicator for awhile and need guidance to jump-start your career, you can be a part of the mentoring program. Success is based on what you want to do. A mentor can suggest methods for advancement, recommend books and other resources, and offer résumé assistance and career guidance. As a protégé, you have requirements to fulfill, too. You should ask questions, listen and be open to suggestions, and keep the lines of communication open.

The STC Lone Star community is continually looking for mentors and people who need mentors. This is a wonderful program that benefits all involved.

Join an information session on **September 6 from 5:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.** before the monthly meeting if you are interested in learning more about the benefits of having a mentor. Ask for the Mentoring program session location when you check in at the Registration desk. See you there!

Resources:

1. About.com: www.about.com
2. The Mentoring Leadership & Resource Network: www.mentors.com
3. The Resources Agency Mentor Program
4. Catheryn Mason and Elizabeth Bailey, "Benefits and Pitfalls of Mentoring," STC 2005 Annual Conference Proceedings.

Scholarship Committee

by Robert Carr Harris, Manager, Scholarship committee



The LSC October meeting was a successful one, and many came to support the community and hear Jack Molisani present. Mr. Molisani was a great contributor to the scholarship fund and purchased raffle tickets for all the Texas Tech students who were visiting.

October Meeting Raffle Recipients

The winners for the door prizes last month included:

- **Kathryn Goff**, who won the Cow Basket prize prepared by LSC's own Kathryn Poe
- **Kristin Kirkham**, an LSC member who won a TechSmith schwag bag containing TechSmith software demos, TechSmith t-shirts, an STC planner, and various other goodies
- **Susie Lynn Fox**, LSC president, who won the Franklin Covey planner and starter kit set and a polo shirt and memo book from ADX

The Scholarship Committee wants to especially thank Franklin Covey, ADX, TechSmith, and Kathryn Poe for helping sponsor October's door prizes. Thank you to everyone for helping support the LSC Scholarship fund.

See you next month!

Member Recognition Committee

by [Mel Haughton](#), LSC immediate past president

Nominate a Bright LSC Star for the BALA!

Do you know an LSC member who displays enthusiasm, seeks difficult challenges, inspires others, and enhances the reputation of LSC? Then get ready to nominate this person for the Binion Amerson Leadership Award (BALA).



The BALA recognizes LSC members who provide great leadership and service to the LSC. Any member in good standing with the LSC may nominate another member.

Nominate someone today!

November 14 is the application deadline. We will announce the winner at the Awards Banquet on January 10.

Questions?

- Visit http://stc-dfw.org/pages/awards_Amerson.htm for more information.
- E-mail volunteers@stc-dfw.org.

Are you a Superstar?



Do you like making a difference and stepping up to help? Do you need a few more samples for your portfolio? Do you want to work on your networking skills? How about get your head around a new piece of software?

If you answered **yes** to any of these questions, then dive in and start volunteering today. You'll be on your way to becoming a Superstar!

You automatically receive points each time you participate in LSC activities. Points are based upon the activity and its point values and are listed in the table below.

LSC Activity	Points
Attend a monthly meeting	1
Attend a council meeting	1
Volunteer at an event	2
Contribute to a community service effort	1
Judge competitions	3
Contribute an article to newsletter	1
Bring a guest to meeting	1
Be a mentor	5
Present at an STC event (Local, regional, or international)	2
Speak to a student group about Technical Communication and STC	2
Convince a guest to join	5

Our Volunteer Wrangler will keep score from August 1, 2007 to June 1, 2008. Collect a total of 20 points to become an LSC Superstar. All Superstars will be recognized at the September 2008 meeting.

So, start volunteering today and become a Superstar and become part of the Superstar team. Winners receive a unique LSC Superstar shirt. The only way to get this shirt is to get involved and earn those points.

Send an e-mail to volunteers@stc-dfw.org to learn more about volunteer opportunities.

Volunteer Committee: Want to help a little?

by [Mel Haughton](#), LSC Volunteer Wrangler

Have you thought about the difference you can make in someone's life just by offering a bit of your time? How does it make you feel when you need help and someone actually comes through? Does it bring you happiness? Does it feel good to get something done as a team?

Where I come from we have a saying: "One hand helps the other." If you give a bit of your time to help someone, one day someone will help you out as well. That's how we like to work here at the LSC. We're a big happy family, and we're always looking for talented individuals to help us out!

We currently have the following opportunities that would take a limited amount of your time:

- Edit our Web site (a two- to three-hour job)
- Be a greeter or help at the Registration desk (a 30-minute job) during our monthly meeting
- Write, edit, and print programs for our monthly meetings (a two-hour job)
- Write articles for our online newsletter, *Technically Write*. (The time commitment depends on how much you write!)

So it doesn't take that much time! And if you think you can spare more time than this, think about organizing half-day workshops or serving as an assistant to a committee manager.

E-mail me at volunteers@stc-dfw.org if you want to make a difference in LSC.

What's in it for you, you ask? Think about how you will increase your network! Think about the additions you can make to your résumé and your portfolio! Think about how many people will appreciate you for your efforts.

Send your e-mail to me right away, and let me know where you can help. I look forward to hearing from you!

LSC Membership Minute

by [Jeanne Foster](#), Manager, Membership and SIN SIG

Shy? Inactive? New? Looking for your niche? Join us! The Shy, Inactive, and New Special Interest Group (SIN SIG) meeting is open to all our members. It is a great way to network before the meeting and learn more about our community. Please consider dropping in before the next meeting begins.

One thing I like about the SIN SIG meetings is the opportunity to meet other professionals with areas of expertise and work environments that differ from my own. There is a great deal of diversity in our community. In my case, I've been working out of my home since 2001 with an occasional trip to California to network with my colleagues from around the world—United States, Brazil, Japan, Sweden, and Israel.

Networking and “visiting” is one of my favorite pastimes. Not long ago, my brother came to visit me for the first time since I moved to Texas in 1984. (I'm sure he loves me. He just really does not like to fly. And don't even mention “road trip” to a man with six kids!) On the trip back to the airport during a Monday rush hour, traffic was moving along quite smartly, and my brother, who is accustomed to the Washington, DC commute, was quite amazed. He asked if this was a typical rush hour. I told him I couldn't really say since a bad commute for me is when we have a two-cat pile-up in the hallway between my bedroom and my office. My brother, who looks a lot like Santa Claus rewarded me for that little witticism with a classic belly laugh. Maybe you have a non-traditional work environment, too. Networking at the LSC and SIN SIG meetings gives us a chance to find out more about our community's members and their work environments—some unique, some just like your own. SIN SIG is a great way to join in a relaxed setting, get to know the rich collection of professionals we have in our midst, get a glimpse into the worlds of others, and give them a peek at ours.

What Happens at SIN SIG? During the October meeting, our numbers swelled with the Texas Tech student visitors. The timing of their visit could not have been better since we also had Rob Carr Harris visit with us and share information about traditional education and continuing

education scholarships. In addition, Mel Haughton (Immediate Past President) joined us to represent the LSC Council and the Mentoring committee, and to share her experiences with LSC-sponsored student projects at the University of North Texas.

Plan Ahead. Before the **November 8th** LSC meeting, we will once again meet at **5:45 p.m.** at the Crowne Plaza Hotel Dallas-Addison. This month, our guest of honor is Jackie Damrau, who will share information about our award-winning newsletter, *Technically Write*.

Farewell and Welcome. We bid farewell to Athena Mondello, who has relocated to the East Tennessee chapter, while we welcome several new and transferring members:

- Corinda Cunningham
- Danielle Arvanitis
- Connie Lopez
- Brenda K. Morton
- Melanie L. Nance

We Miss You! I'll tell you, living half a country away from my family can be really tough sometimes. I miss my siblings (all six of them). But when we get together, it is as if we were never separated.

Please help us find some members we miss. The following people are listed in the "Undeliverable Addresses" section of the monthly STC membership report.

- Larel Bender
- Daryl S. Bowdoin
- Rebecca L. Carr
- Sherry V. Hensley
- Richard L. Hightower

E-mail me at membership@stc-dfw.org if you have contact information for any of our missing members.

Change or Upgrade Your Membership. Upgrade your STC membership (from "Limited" or "E-membership" to "Classic") or add communities or SIGs to your existing membership.

- Mail or fax a completed STC Membership Change/Upgrade Form to the STC office.
- Download and print the form: http://www.stc.org/PDF_Files/memberApp2006.pdf

Human Factors

by [Kathryn Poe](#), Associate Fellow



Welcome to the Human Factors column. My intent is to talk to some of our senior members and officer so you can get to know them and they can share with you. LSC has a plethora of folks who have been in technical communications for some time. We have seen major changes in technology, expectations, and direction since we started, and here is our chance to communicate some of that to you. As I like to tell the newbies I meet, if I can keep you from stepping in a few of the potholes I have found, it is worth the effort.

By way of exposition, I will ask a person the same questions each month and their answers will appear right here. Feel free to send your ideas and comments to me at kpoe@ursaminorservices.com to make this information more useful to you.

+++++

Name:

Jackie Damrau

**Job Title:**

Knowledge Management Analyst 3,
Enterprise Architecture Group, T-Mobile USA, Inc.

What do you actually do?

I write release notes for the T-Mobile HotSpot products and services; provide presentation and writing support for the T-Mobile HotSpot teams; provide knowledge management support for physical assets (documents, drawings, and so on) for the Enterprise Architecture (EA) team; and create and produce the weekly Enterprise IT CIO report. I'm also a member of an internal team of T-Mobile Web editors who meet bi-monthly to agree and update our T-Mobile Enterprise Style Guide.

What hard skills have you found most useful and how do you continue to cultivate those skills?

The hard skills that I use include knowing several software packages and being very proficient in their use. I also must stay up-to-date with the latest information around knowledge management (not content management) to provide direction to the EA team in storing our physical assets in the selected document repository.

Cultivating my skills requires reading the latest books and articles on knowledge management, plus attending many free Webinars provided by knowledge management providers to gain an understanding of different ways of creating taxonomies and such for easy searchability that aids in finding the physical assets for re-use.

Do you consider yourself a guru at any particular subject?

Instructional Design, Knowledge Management

What is the greatest benefit of being an STC member?

Networking, meeting international technical communicators, being part of a close-knit family of professionals, learning experience that I get from my peers, and the ability to explore and work in areas outside of my general job duties, which helps me use those skills in my daily job.

Why have you stuck around so long? What's kept you here?

I've been in STC for over 13 years and in the technical communication profession for over 30 years.

I've stuck around so long in STC because of the value that I get from it versus the other professional organizations that I have joined in the past and left because I wasn't receiving the value I wanted for the price of the membership. That membership price was much more than I pay for STC, so you can see that even if they are raising my STC dues, I'm still going to remain with STC, as it provides me with the most benefit for my chosen profession.

Career-wise, I've stuck around because I have a passion for the written word, enjoy learning new areas, and enjoy sharing my knowledge and experience with my peers. For me, like you, working is a necessity, so I might as well enjoy what it is I do. Of course, it takes a while to find the "right" employer to stay at, which I've only managed to do three times. Yet, with every job I've held, I've learned something about myself and about the types of employers that I don't want to work for ever again.

What positions in LSC and STC have you held?

In LSC, I am the Managing Newsletter Editor and Education co-chair. I've served in the four levels of leadership for the community and as Volunteer Wrangler, Hospitality committee member, and 2006 Region 5 co-chair. My current STC rank is associate fellow.

In STC, I am the manager of the Instructional Design & Learning Special Interest Group (IDL SIG); manager of the Leadership Community Resource (LCR) committee; and member of the Community Advocacy Committee (CAC), the SIG Leaders committee, and the Nominating committee. I have also served as assistant manager and Managing Newsletter Editor for the IDL and Management SIGs, co-project manager of the Funding Model project, and manager of the LCR's Training Planning & Development committee.

"How can I get involved and if I do, what's in it for me?"

Becoming involved in this organization requires your willingness to help in an area you are familiar with or stepping outside your comfort zone to gain experience. It's a great testbed where you have many mentors around to help you learn new things. To get involved, you just need to send an e-mail to a committee manager or STC officer saying you are interested in helping out.

How have you benefited from volunteering?

I started in LSC by volunteering to be the Volunteer Wrangler during Jim Chambless's presidency. That introduced me to Beth Bailey and Dawn Lofgren, who both encouraged me to run for second vice president. From there, my life launched into where I am today. I wouldn't exchange the friendships and experience I've acquired by being a member and volunteer for anything.

How do I meet/recognize senior members?

I try to talk with as many people as I can at local meetings. I also get many e-mails from people inside and outside STC asking me to mentor them in learning more about the technical communication profession. I've even had a mentor relationship occur based on having completed an online information design certificate program for people wanting to know if the program is good. Once you become known for helping and being available, all sorts of folks ask for your help. Plus, folks who know you pass on your name as one who is available and eager to share their experiences.

Do senior members/council members really want to talk to me?

Yes! Senior members and council members "want" to hear your thoughts and opinions. Providing services that will keep you coming to the monthly meetings and attending workshops and seminars is what helps us to ensure we are meeting your needs. The silent members are our worst enemy as we can never ensure we are providing them with the information they want to receive. My best advice to anyone is to let us know what you want, volunteer to help make it happen, and sit back and smile as you see the suggestion come to fruition.

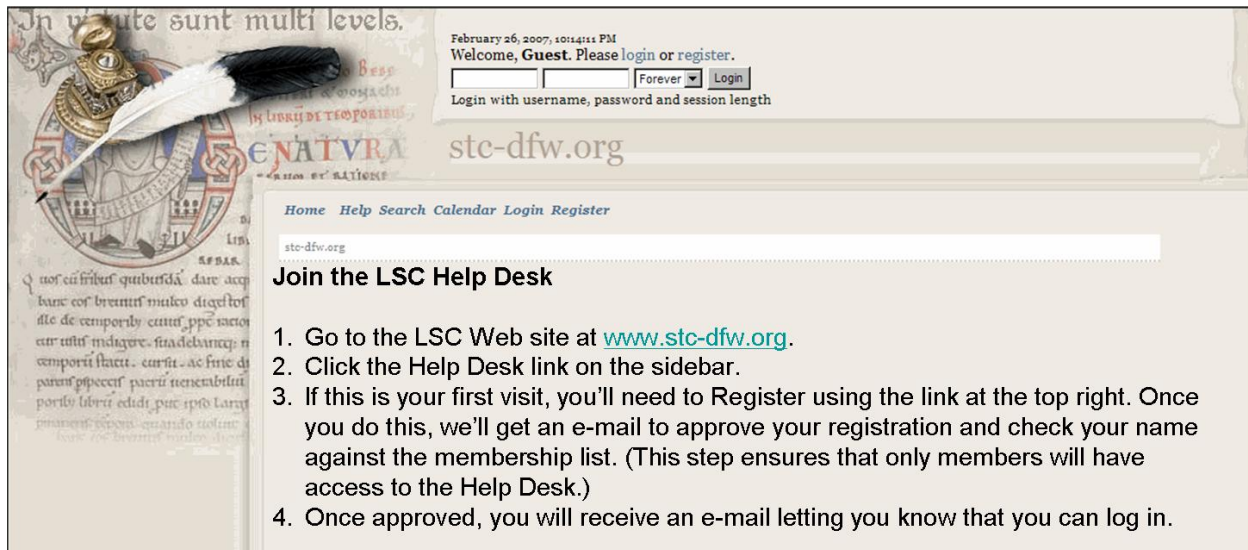
Can STC really help me find a job?

Definitely. Using the LSC Job Bank is a good source for local jobs. The STC Job Center is another good source for local and international jobs. Also, networking with local members helps you to find opportunities that may not be posted anywhere.

Word of mouth is good, too. My last two jobs came from friends who knew me. I was recommended for my job at T-Mobile by Kathryn Poe, who had worked in this position several years ago. Of course, everything has changed since her time here, but I wouldn't have found this wonderful opportunity had she not known that I was looking for a better opportunity.

LSC Help Desk

by [Kathryn Poe](#), Associate Fellow



February 26, 2007, 10:14:11 PM
Welcome, **Guest**. Please [login](#) or [register](#).
Login with username, password and session length

stc-dfw.org

[Home](#) [Help](#) [Search](#) [Calendar](#) [Login](#) [Register](#)

stc-dfw.org

Join the LSC Help Desk

1. Go to the LSC Web site at www.stc-dfw.org.
2. Click the Help Desk link on the sidebar.
3. If this is your first visit, you'll need to Register using the link at the top right. Once you do this, we'll get an e-mail to approve your registration and check your name against the membership list. (This step ensures that only members will have access to the Help Desk.)
4. Once approved, you will receive an e-mail letting you know that you can log in.

LSC SIG News

Independents and Networking

by [Jo Byrd](#), CIC SIG Manager

Working in the consulting/contracting arena requires an extensive network if we're to be successful or if we want to enjoy more or less continuous employment. Sadly, we all need to expand our network.

Send e-mail to jbyrd@byrdwrites.com for more information.

Lone Star Job Bank



Lone Star's [Job Bank](#) is online at the LSC Web site, listing local employment opportunities. The Job Bank is updated as jobs are submitted.

If you're looking for work, or wish to post a position, visit the Web site and follow the instructions.

The international [STC Web site](#) maintains nationwide job listings, along with some international opportunities.

STC Texas Communities

Links to Texas STC resources:

STC Communities in Texas

[Alamo](#)
[Austin](#)
[Houston](#)

[Alamo Tech Line](#)
[Austin Newsletter/Blog](#)
[Dateline Houston](#)

STC Student Communities in Texas

[College Station \(TAMU\)](#)
[Texas Tech University \(TTU\)](#)

[Events](#)

Educational and Networking Opportunities

Organization	Day	Place
North Texas PC Users Group (NTPCUG)	Third Saturday	King of Glory Lutheran Church
DFW Usability Professionals' Association (UPA) E-mail: dfwupa@yahoo.com	Third Tuesday	varies
Dallas Association of Women in Computing	First Thursday	Crowne Plaza, Addison
North Texas Adobe Captivate User Group E-mail: Walt Stewart	Third Tuesday	varies

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STC News

Read about:

- [STC News](#)
- [STC Community Events](#)
- Upcoming STC Webinars – None scheduled at this time

STC News

Searching in the World of STC

(taken from a posting to the STC Webmasters Discussion List by [Destry Wion](#), dated 10/2/2007)

“...if anyone is searching for anything in the world of STC, use the STC World Search (<http://stcforum.org/world/search>). I just did a Boolean search using “Guidelines AND Logo” and that document [Guidelines For Use of the STC Logo and Logotype] was the first item in the returned results.

“One-point-five (1.5) seconds for typing, and a recorded 0.28 seconds to return the results, so it was a 1.78-second search once I was on the World Search page! It doesn't get any better than that.”

STC Tieline Articles of Interest

Browse on over to the [October 2007](#) issue of the *STC Tieline, The Society Leaders' Newsletter*, where you can find these interesting articles:

- [Leadership is a Relationship](#) (Linda Oestreich, STC president)
- [Invest in an STC Membership](#) (Karen Mardahl, Co-manager, AccessAbility SIG)
- [Effective Delegating Achieves Results](#) (Suzanna Laurent, Associate Fellow, Oklahoma Chapter)

Other STC Community Events

November 10 – 11, 2007

U.K. Chapter STC will hold a workshop on making the most of DITA at the Novotel Hotel, Manchester Centre in Manchester, England. Alan Houser, principal of Group Wellesley consultants, will be one of the workshop leaders. Workshop and training topics will include making DITA work for your data, working with DITA and FrameMaker for authoring and publishing, and XMetaL and the DITA open toolkit.

For more information, contact Anthony Davey, Chapter Vice President, at anthony.davey@rssb.co.uk or visit www.stcuk.org.

March 14, 2008

France Chapter STC will host its annual conference in Paris. The theme is "Communicating Europe." The conference will celebrate the diversity of technical communication in Europe.

For more information, e-mail conference@stcfrance.org or visit www.stcfrance.org.

March 14 – 15, 2008

Atlanta Chapter STC will host its conference, "Current 2008," at the Southern Polytechnic State University campus in Marietta, Georgia.

For more information, visit www.stcatlanta.org/

March 28, 2008

Rochester Chapter STC will hold "Spectrum 2008" at the R.I.T. Inn and Conference Center in Rochester, New York. Ginny Redish, a usability consultant for Redish & Associates, Inc., who founded the Document Design Center for the American Institutes for Research in 1979, will serve as keynote speaker.

For more information, watch www.stcrochester.org for updates.

April 14 – 15, 2008

Manitoba Chapter STC and Red River College will hold their fifth annual technical communication conference at the Red River College Princess Street campus.

For more information, contact Brad Friesen at Brad.L.Friesen@gmail.com or visit www.stcmanitoba.org.

April 16 – 18, 2008

TransAlpine Chapter STC—representing Austria, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, and Switzerland—will hold its 2008 conference in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The event kicks off with a one-day workshop on Wednesday, April 16, followed by the two-day conference on Thursday and Friday, April 17–18.

For more information, visit stc-on.org/transalpine/.

June 1 – 4, 2008

Technical Communication Summit — STC's 55th Annual Conference will be held at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

For more information, visit www.stc.org/55thConf/index.asp.

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November 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 6:15pm LSC Council	2 Time: Event	3 Time: Event
4 Time: Event	5 Time: Event	6 Time: Event	7 Time: Event	8 5:45pm LSC Mtg.	9 Time: Event	10 Time: Event
11 Time: Event	12 Time: Event	13 Time: Event	14 BALA Apps Due	15 Time: Event	16 Time: Event	17 Time: Event
18 Time: Event	19 Time: Event	20 Newsletter Articles due	21 Time: Event	22 Happy Thanksgiving 	23 Time: Event	24 Time: Event
25 Time: Event	26 Time: Event	27 Time: Event	28 Time: Event	29 Time: Event	30 Time: Event	

December 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Time: Event
2 Time: Event	3 Time: Event	4 Time: Event	5 Time: Event	6 6:15pm LSC Council	7 Time: Event	8 Time: Event
9 Time: Event	10 Time: Event	11 Newsletter Articles due	12 BALA Apps Due	13 5:45pm LSC Mtg.	14 All Day LSC Workshops.	15 Time: Event
16 Time: Event	17 Time: Event	18 Time: Event	19 Time: Event	20 Time: Event	21 Time: Event	22 Time: Event
23 Time: Event	24 Time: Event	25 	26 Time: Event	27 Time: Event	28 Time: Event	29 Time: Event
30 Time: Event						

January 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 A HAPPY NEW YEAR	2 Time: Event	3 6:15pm LSC Council	4 Time: Event	5 Time: Event
6 Time: Event	7 Time: Event	8 Time: Event	9 Time: Event	10 5:45pm Awards Banquet	11 Time: Event	12 Time: Event
13 Time: Event	14 Time: Event	15 Time: Event	16 BALA Apps Due	17 Time: Event	18 Time: Event	19 Time: Event
20 Time: Event	21 Time: Event	22 Newsletter Articles due	23 Time: Event	24 Time: Event	25 Time: Event	26 Time: Event
27 Time: Event	28 Time: Event	29 Time: Event	30 Time: Event	31 Time: Event		

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About TW

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About *Technically Write*

Published monthly from September through May, “Technically Write” is the official newsletter of the STC Lone Star community. It is produced by, for, and about the members, associates, and friends of the STC Lone Star Community.

Opinions expressed are those of the authors, and are not necessarily those of the STC nor the STC Lone Star community. Neither the STC nor the STC Lone Star community endorses products or services, but may, as part of our educational activities, allow their mention in articles and notices.

Reprint/Linking Policy

STC communities and organizations worldwide are welcome to link to or reproduce original material in *Technically Write* with proper attribution (source, issue date, and author's name) in the link text, or in the byline.

For specific file path information, contact the Managing Editor at e-mail: newsletter@stc-dfw.org. Kindly notify the Managing Editor through e-mail when electronic reprints are published, or send a copy of publications containing reprinted versions to the Managing Editor at the address below.

Mailing Address:

Technically Write
P.O. Box 515065
Dallas, TX 75251-5065

Advertising

Advertising is available in Technically Write in an advertising section. If you have Web-ready (the 21st century equivalent of "camera-ready") content in the form of a GIF or JPG file, we can include it, if it is 432 pixels (6 inches) wide or less. (Anything larger will be resampled.) It will be placed in an advertising section on its own page. It will NOT be a "banner" ad. The rate for one issue is US \$125. Discounts apply as follows:

	Single Issue	Five Issue Package	Nine Issue Package (Full Volume)
Price	\$125	\$600 (\$120/issue)	\$900 (\$100/issue)
Discount	\$0	\$25	\$225

We do not support animated GIFs or other animation technologies at this time.

Payment

Payment can be made by check, money order, or purchase order made payable to Lone Star STC. PayPal® is also available. Full payment arrangements are due before the ad runs. The payment address is:

Lone Star STC
 PO Box 515065
 Dallas, TX 75251-5065
 Attn: Treasurer, Newsletter Ad

Terms of Service

STC Lone Star community reserves the right to refuse ads.

Inquiries and Requests

Contact the Managing Editor at e-mail: newsletter@stc-dfw.org for more information.

Copyright and Trademark

This newsletter invites writers to submit articles they wish to be considered for publication. Note: By submitting an article, you implicitly grant a license to this newsletter to run the article and for other STC publications to reprint it without permission. Copyright is held by the writer. In your cover letter, please let the editor know if this article has run elsewhere, and if it has been submitted for consideration to other publications.

Some articles might refer to companies or products whose names are covered by trademark or registered trademark. All trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Reference to a specific product does not constitute an endorsement of the product by the LSC or STC.

Newsletter Design and Layout:

Courtesy of University of North Texas, Spring 2007 English 4180 class
 © STC, 2007

Submit to *Technically Write*

Technically Write is pleased to accept contributions from community members and student members on a wide variety of topics, including (but not limited to):

- Evaluations of tools, software, trade publications, and the like
- Lessons learned, tips, advice for the newbie
- Testimonials regarding the value of STC to the member
- Sharing STC Conference insights
- Bios of STC members
- News of charitable undertakings by members, whether or not they involve trade skills.

Technically Write is published on the first Thursday of each month (September through May).

The editorial team retains and exercises the right to edit submitted and requested material for clarity, length, and appropriateness.

Contributions to *Technically Write*

- Must be submitted no later than the deadlines listed below.
E-mail: newsletter@stc-dfw.org.
- Are best submitted in Word format, or in the text of an e-mail message.
- Have no length limit, but need to be written with online presentation in mind.
- May have accompanying graphics in GIF or JPG format. Editors reserve the right to resample, crop, or exclude images if necessary.
- Should also include a short (25-word) biography of the author.

Author Guidelines

In case you haven't noticed, *Technically Write* is an online magazine, or e-zine. From Kurt Ament to Strunk and White, e-zine savvy people have this advice:

- Write short sentences.
- Make short paragraphs, 3 to 5 sentences at the most.
- Do not use semicolons (;). They are an excuse to lengthen sentences.
- Aim for no more than 500 to 700 words of content. If you desire to write a longer piece, please subdivide it with subheads, so that it can be serialized.
- Use our Style Guide when writing your articles.

2007-2008 Submission Deadlines

Deadlines for article submissions for this year are:

Issue	Deadline
September	August 21
October	September 18
November	October 23
December	November 20
January	December 18
February	January 22
March	February 19
April	March 19
May	April 16

Technically Write Staff

Managing Editor: [Jackie Damrau](#)

Editor: **OPEN**

Contributing Editor: **OPEN**

Copyeditors: [Ann Balaban](#)

[Karl J. Morris](#)

[Jeanne Foster](#)

[Alan Oak](#)

[Melissa Haughton](#)

[Paula Robertson](#)

[Mike Hiatt](#)

[Arroxane Ullman](#)

[Mary McWilliams Johnson](#)

[Monica Winkelman](#)

Contributors: UNT Students (Michelle LeBlanc, David Wilcocks, Sarah Hilton), Robert Carr Harris, [Jeanne Foster](#), [Jim Korth](#), [Elisa Miller](#), [Ann Balaban](#), [Mel Haughton](#), [Jo Byrd](#)

Columnists: [Susie Lynn Fox](#), [Mary McWilliams Johnson](#), [Alan Oak](#), [Kathryn Poe](#), [Louellen Coker](#)

Photographers: [Douglas Dow](#), [Dale Erickson](#), Lou Capone (IMC²)

Photo Editor: [Douglas Dow](#)

Graphics: [Mary McWilliams Johnson](#)

Ex-Officio: [Chapter Officers](#)

LSC Officers

President: [Susie Lynn Fox](#)

1st Vice President: [Elisa Miller](#)

2nd Vice President: [Heather Steele](#)

Newsletter Editor: [Jackie Damrau](#)

Visit the [LSC Web site](#) for a complete list of community contacts.

Staff Bios

Ann Balaban, a former LSC president (1996-97), has produced award-winning documentation at Texas Instruments (TI) for many years. Recently, high-quality documentation was cited as a significant factor in obtaining new business at TI.

Jo Byrd survived through two degrees and a job from hell before she discovered she didn't want to be a librarian and after several additional missteps to find technical writing. A member of STC since 1992 and CIC SIG Manager since 1995, Jo helps others as she was helped early on.

Louellen S. Coker, owner of Content Solutions, a certified Women's Business Enterprise (WBE), is a past president of the Lone Star Community and is also a member of the CIC, Lone Writers and Marketing SIGs. When not at her computer, you can find her training for that next marathon or sailing with her husband.

Jackie Damrau works at T-Mobile USA. She has more than 26 years of combined experience in technical writing and instructional design. Besides supporting STC activities through LSC and two national SIGs, Jackie enjoys going to the movies and reading classic literature, Irish/Scottish/English historical romance novels, or time-travel romance novels.

Doug Dow has been a member of the Lone Star Chapter since 1990, when he transferred from the Boston chapter. He has served in various capacities, including competition judge, chair of the Community Service Committee, and five years as newsletter Managing Editor. His interests outside of the cubicle include T'ai Chi, swing dancing, and honking on one of his many saxophones.

Dale Erickson serves the Lone Star Community as a Technically Write photographer and manager of the IPIIC mailing list. He has been an STC member since 1982 and holds the rank of Fellow. Dale is senior technical writer at One Network Enterprises in Dallas.

Jeanne Foster is a lone writer for Jasper Design Automation, a privately-held electronic design automation (EDA) company headquartered in Mountain View, California. Besides technical communications, her varied career includes everything from government service to early childhood and elementary education. Jeanne is a recipient of the LSC 2007 Distinguished Community Service Award. She has volunteered as Region 5 Conference Registration manager and LSC Hospitality manager, and she is currently the Membership chair and SIN SIG manager. Beyond LSC volunteer opportunities, Jeanne enjoys beach vacations, dining at fine restaurants, and light-hearted banter with her colleagues.

Susie Lynn Fox, a Lone Star member since 2003, is serving as the 2007-2008 President of LSC. She enjoys the great learning opportunities and fun at the local meetings and national conferences. Susie is a senior technical writer at American Airlines, Inc.

Melissa (Mel) Haughton is an Instructional Designer and Project Coordinator for MLink Technologies in Lewisville, TX. She has a Master's degree in Technical Writing from the University of North Texas. Mel is the immediate past president and volunteer wrangler of the Lone Star Community.

Mike Hiatt is a former journalist who owned his own newspaper at one time before realizing surviving in Dallas required a bigger paycheck. Mike's father, a technical writer for 30 years, prompted his move into technical communications. He started as a proposal writer (responding to customer requests for proposals, not grant writing) before moving into the technical publications department at a small Dallas telecommunications company. Mike has primarily documented software writing user guides and help files

Mary McWilliams Johnson is a retired technical writer and Web designer. Check out her Web site: GraphicsByMary.com: <http://www.graphicsbymary.com>. (The SuperConnect site no longer exists.)

Jim Korth has worked in technical communications and support for twelve years with Microsoft, Compaq, and IBM. He holds technical certifications from Microsoft, Novell, and ITIL. Jim previously worked in banking at Citigroup and holds a B.S. Degree in Accounting from Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

Elisa Kaplan Miller took a checkered path to her current position as User Experience Architect at Perot Systems. She's been a journalist, trainer, college professor, editor, analyst, and usability lab manager. She spends her free time as LSC membership manager, trying to expand the view of what STC thinks of as technical communication professionals.

Karl J. Morris is a native of the San Francisco Bay Area. He has a background in sales, marketing, and technical writing within the telecommunications industry. Karl holds a BS degree in Information Systems from Golden Gate University in San Francisco and a Graduate Marketing Certificate from Southern Methodist University in Dallas. He worked five years as an information/course developer for Nortel Networks. In addition, he spent three years as a marketing communications consultant for Efore USA. He has spent the last two years working in event marketing, currently working at the AT&T Experience store at Northpark Mall.

Alan Oak is majoring in English–Professional Writing at Ellis College of the New York Institute of Technology to train for a new career in technical communication. His prior career experience is in information technology. Alan is looking forward to paying work as a technical communicator after his 2008 graduation. Currently, he is serving as Web master of the Lone Star Community's Web site.

Kathryn Poe, Associate Fellow and past chapter president, is a self-proclaimed Knowledge Wrangler. She is currently enlightening minds in the financial sector.

Paula Robertson's Technical Communication career comprises twelve years as writer and editor of software and hardware documentation for domestic and international clients in transportation, telecommunications, and other industries. A previous career in computer graphics rounds out her skills as a "full-service" editor. As a Senior Member of STC, Paula has learned the value of the term and the practice of "networking."

Arroxane T. Ullman is a Senior Technical Writer at Sundance Digital. She has an MA in Technical Writing and a BS in Liberal Arts. Arroxane has an eclectic background and is a former US Marine. She is grateful to be an active member of LSC and a Big Sister with Big Brothers Big Sisters of North Texas.

Monica Winkelman is the lone technical writer at Hyphen Solutions in Addison, which produces scheduling software for construction home builders. She has a B.A. in Journalism and an M.A. in Technical Writing from the University of North Texas in Denton.

Lauren Womack is the owner of Algonquin Consulting and the functioning Lone Writer Information Designer for HySecurity in Washington State. She is working on creating a single-source information solution for their customer-facing documentation. A Senior Member of STC, and the grateful recipient of a 2006 Distinguished Community Service Award, Lauren is the PR Manager of the Lone Star Community (3rd year!) and can be reached at PublicRelations@stc-dfw.org. With this position on the community council, she hopes to expand her skills and network while she serves the Lone Star Community. Lauren looks forward to meeting YOU at any community function in the near future, and is always looking to help members find leads and jobs.

STC Mission Statement



“STC advances the theory and practice of technical communication across all user abilities and all media.”

STC is an individual membership organization dedicated to advancing the arts and sciences of technical communication. It is the largest organization of its type in the world. Its 18,000 members include technical writers and editors, content developers, documentation specialists, technical illustrators, instructional designers, academics, information architects, usability and human factors professionals, visual designers, Web designers and developers, and translators - anyone whose work makes technical information available to those who need it. For more information, contact the STC headquarters:

[Society for Technical Communication](#)

901 N. Stuart Street
Suite 904
Arlington, VA 22203-1854

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Technically Wired

A proof-of-concept experiment in 1996, Technically Wired took the content of Technically Write and combined it with the graphical potential of the Web. Three issues were produced until the Internet Professional Interest Committee (IPIC)—as SIGs were known then—decided it was too intensive an effort for one person.

Links and e-mail addresses in these issues have been disabled, since they're likely to be extinct.

September 1996

October 1996

November 1996