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Tapping the Brains of SMEs

In April, our program meeting will be held jointly with the local chapter of ASQ (American Society for Quality). Join us **April 10** for **Tapping the Brains of SMEs for Tacit Knowledge and Ensuring Easy Reuse**.

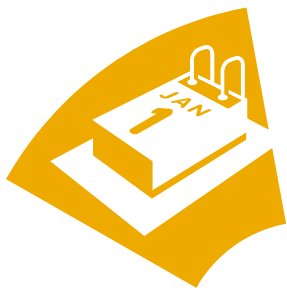
An unconventional view of identifying an SME (Subject Matter Expert) will be presented, including: What makes a person an SME? How can we identify SMEs? How much experience should an SME have to be recognized as one? What are some suggested ways to elicit tacit knowledge so it can be documented, archived, and reused? And more!

Save the Date: Thursday, April 10

Where	Our standard meeting location: Courtyard by Marriott, 201 S. Williams Blvd, in the Williams Centre near Broadway and Craycroft in Tucson.
Register	5:30 to 6 p.m.
Dinner	6 to 7 p.m. Pasta Buffet: Penne pasta, alfredo sauce, pomodoro sauce, meatballs, grilled chicken strips, mozzarella sticks, fresh tossed Caesar salad, and freshly baked garlic bread. Includes tea, coffee, soft drinks, and dessert.
Meeting	7 to 8:30 p.m.
Cost	Member prices below apply to members of STC or ASQ: Meeting only (no dinner): Free to members; \$5 for nonmembers Dinner and meeting: \$10 members and \$15 nonmembers Nonmembers can save \$5 at their first meeting with the coupon on page 2.
RSVP	Send an e-mail message to Beth Kane (beth.kane@pearson.com) by 4 p.m. on Monday, April 7. No-shows will be billed. Walk-ins are always welcome, but we cannot guarantee a meal.

The mission of the Southern Arizona chapter of the Society for Technical Communication:

to elevate the technical communication professions, to increase public awareness of these professions, and to serve as a resource to members.



Clip and Save:

Planned Program Schedule

Southern Arizona STC Planned Events 2003

May 8	Recognition party: location to be announced
June	Annual planning meeting: date and location to be announced
June to August	Summer sabbatical

Unless otherwise noted, programs are held on the second Thursday of each month at the Courtyard by Marriott, 201 S. Williams Blvd. (in the Williams Centre near Broadway and Craycroft, in Tucson, Arizona). For up-to-date meeting information, visit our Web site: www.stc-saz.org

Phoenix STC Planned Events 2003

April 8	Steve Miley Outsourcing of Documentation: Benefits and Pitfalls. The winners of the Society for Technical Communication's 2002 International Technical Art Competition will also be on display.
May 13	Doreen Mannion Using Humor in the Workplace
June 10	Annual Recognition and Awards Dinner
July 8	Informal networking and job leads
August 12	Informal networking and job leads

For up-to-date meeting information, visit www.stc-phoenix.com/

Résumé table at both chapters' events: If you're a job seeker, drop off several copies of your résumé. If you're an employer, drop off your business card or information about open positions.

Don't belong to STC yet? Want to just check out our chapter? Use this coupon to save \$5.

STC, Southern Arizona Chapter Nonmember Coupon

Save \$5 at Your First Meeting

We encourage nonmembers to attend a chapter program to learn about STC and the Southern Arizona Chapter. Bring this completed coupon to the first chapter program you attend, and you'll save \$5 off the cost of admission.

Name (please print): _____

E-mail address: _____

Date of program: _____



President's Corner:

Are You Dallas-Bound?

Helen Marty, Chapter President

HAVE YOU BEEN thinking about attending the STC's 50th Annual Conference? Regardless if this is your first conference or your fifteenth, now is the time to act. Come join the more than 2,200 technical communicators expected to attend the conference in Dallas, May 18-21, 2003, where you'll have unique educational and networking opportunities.

With more than 250 technical sessions available, you'll be able to choose from every aspect of technical communication tailored to various levels of expertise. There are sessions about tools and technology, management, usability and information design, writing and editing, professional development, and theory, research, education and training. You can also attend an index or a manual evaluation workshop, where an experienced indexer or an expert in document design will discuss your work on a one-on-one basis.

Two of Southern Arizona's (SAZ) chapter members, Brenda Huettner and myself, will be making presentations. On Tuesday, May 20, at 11 a.m., Brenda is participating in the panel discussion "Preparing Your Conference Proposal." On May 20 at 4 p.m., I'll be facilitating one of the progression topics, "Have Modem, Won't Travel: Telecommuting for Technical Communicators," for the Special Needs SIG (Special Interest Group).

You'll have several opportunities to network with peers during the sessions, SIG and other networking luncheons, STC-related sessions, and when visiting the various exhibits. One of the highlights of the conference is the Honors Banquet. This year our own Brenda Huettner will be honored as an Associate Fellow.

If you're interested in becoming more involved in STC and the SAZ chapter, plan to attend the Leadership training on Sunday, May 17 at 8:00 a.m. Not only will you meet past, present, and future leaders of STC, but you'll come away with a better understanding of the Society and how you can benefit from involvement in your chapter.

Please let me know if you plan to attend this year's conference. I'd be happy to introduce you to the people I know who will be attending this year.

For those of you unable to attend this year's conference, you can look forward to a future presentation on the conference by Pat Markey, Brenda Huettner, and myself. ■



Letters to the Editor

Editor's note: A senior-level technical writer, indexer, and editor in California who is thinking of moving to Phoenix or Tucson asked to be added to our newsletter distribution list. I referred her to the Chapter Web site and the job e-list. Her reply:

Great topic

I just started reading *The Border Line* and LOL at "Whine & Cheese." The topic looks very interesting and the format (table-to-table) sounds great. But the name is hilarious. Thank you for the heads-up about the job bank. I'll sign up for job e-mails directly.

Best regards,
Cynthia



YTD Meeting Scorecard

Compiled by Carrie Cooper, Chapter Treasurer

What's our most popular meeting so far this year? The following scorecard of meeting date, topic, profit or loss, number of attendees, and overall ratings (wow, good, or poor) does not include two outreach meetings in Sierra Vista, AZ. We want to "Wow" our members at every meeting, so we work hard to keep costs down and provide topics that chapter members value.

Date	Topic	Profit/Loss	Total			
			Attendees	Wow	Good	Poor
Aug-02	Knowledge Management Workshop	154.14	14	40%	60%	0%
Sep-02	Network & Nibble	-84.72	14	63%	38%	0%
Oct-02	Job Hunting Panel	-133.09	21	73%	27%	0%
Nov-02	Career Management in a Tough Economy	-205.56	17	67%	33%	0%
Dec-02	Holiday Party	-338.32	20	0%	56%	44%
Jan-03	Concepts of Copyediting	-23.03	23	67%	33%	0%
Feb-03	Quality Initiatives	-\$126.42	23	14%	79%	7%
Mar-03	Whine & Cheese: Usability	<i>in process</i>	15	100%	0%	0%



Chapter Announcements

Chapter Elections Close April 10, 2003

Ballots to elect the Chapter's Administrative Council, 2003-2004, were mailed out to chapter members on Friday, March 28. If you were a member on February 28, you should have received your ballot in early April. Full statements from all candidates appeared in the March 2003 issue of *The Border Line*, available on the chapter Web site at www.stc-saz.org/newsletter.html. The election deadline is April 10, 2003.

After voting, you have two options:

Mail your ballot back to the chapter at P.O. Box 14333, Tucson AZ 85732-4333.

Simply place a postage stamp on the ballot, tape it, and drop it in the mail. Ballots must be postmarked by April 10, 2003.

Turn your ballot in at the program meeting on April 10, 2003.

Votes will be counted at the April 15 planning meeting. The election results will be announced in our next newsletter.

Fun fact:

As of press time, at least 14 ballots have already been received.

Monthly Planning Meeting

Contribute your ideas for programs and plans at the next Monthly Planning Meeting, which will be held on **Tuesday, April 15** (tax day!), 6 p.m., at the Barnes & Noble coffee shop on Tucson's eastside. This lively discussion meeting consists of Administrative Council members and any chapter members who want to show up. We meet at the Barnes & Noble Booksellers located on the south side of Broadway at Rosemont, between Swan and Craycroft. Its coffee shop is at the front of the building. We'll save a seat for you!

Dirk Arnold's Endangered Architecture

Senior member and Chapter Webmaster **Dirk Arnold** has a new Web site, www.endangeredarchitecture.com. This cool site showcases Dirk's historic preservation miniatures of both facades and signs in Tucson. According to the site, the miniatures of structures that are approximately HO model railroad scale. Dirk focuses primarily on "post-war commercial structures which, at around 50 years of age, are in danger of demolition, replacement, or remodeling... In this age of vinyl banners and computer-cut lettering, classic hand-painted metal signs are rusting away, their neon shattering." It is fascinating to see the ways in which Dirk has recreated these retro structures.

Job Bank E-mail List

The STC Opportunities (Job Bank) e-mail list includes all persons who have asked to receive an STC Opportunity e-mail as soon as a job posting arrives for the SAZ-STC job bank. The e-mail often goes out before the job appears on the SAZ-STC Web site. If you want to be added to the list, send your e-mail address to Paul Veverka (paul.veverka@misyshealthcare.com).

Hats Off to Our Members

We'd like to thank **Paul Veverka** for taking over the Job Bank responsibilities for Bill Rost while he was on a family medical leave recently. Paul did a great job!

Sally Adams has graciously agreed to be our Publicity manager. She's already hard at work getting the word out about our meetings.

Congratulations to **Kelly M. Casson**, who has attained the level of Senior Member after having been a member for five years. ■



Treasurer's Report

Carrie D. Cooper, Chapter Treasurer

HIGHLIGHTS of our chapter's finances for the current fiscal year through March 2003 are given below. The fiscal year runs from July to June.

Cash balance at beginning of FY03\$3,140

YTD Total Income \$4,130.88

STC dues refund	2,211.00	54%
Meetings income.....	1,179.00	29%
Workshop income.....	700.88	17%
Other income and cash donations.....	40.00	1%

YTD Total Expenses \$3,793.21

Major expenses.....	237.34	6%
Meetings expenses.....	2,380.09	63%
Workshop expenses.....	546.74	14%
Other expenses.....	629.04	17%

Surplus\$337.67

Current bank balance.....\$3,478.17



Review: Whine & Cheese

Review by Carrie Cooper, Newsletter Editor

Ratings compiled by Pat Markey, Chapter Vice President

OUR MARCH PROGRAM featured three speakers, Cia Romano, CEO and Founder of Interface Guru, Chapter member Fred Sapio, and Suzie Weisband, an Associate Professor and Eller Fellow in MIS at the University of Arizona. All the speakers did a great job: Cia was an engaging speaker, Fred presented an outstanding way to train with e-mail lessons, and Suzie led an in-depth discussion on usability in our everyday lives as technical communicators. Each speaker had a unique viewpoint on usability.

Attendees totaled 15 (13 from STC and 2 nonmembers). We got 4 responses (27%), which were all positive. Most people raved about the program. Overall scores were:

- 100% wow
- 0% good
- 0% poor

Selected attendee comments:

I've gotta say, that was one of the BEST program meetings we've ever had -- for me, it earned a "wow" on every aspect on the feedback form. Many thanks to those who thought of this topic and found the terrific speakers! I would love to see Cia come back to lead a half-day workshop for us. It, indeed, was a wonderful meeting...WOW! It had all the pieces of "goodness" that much larger chapters are not able to achieve. Congratulations. ■



Letter from Linda

A Guide to Chapter Achievement

Linda Oestreich, Region 5 Director-Sponsor

I hope all chapter leaders keep an eye on the “STC 2003 at a Glance: Timetable for Chapter Leaders” that appeared in the January 2003 *Tieline*. This handy timetable gives you due dates and hints for all kinds of activities, competitions, and reports that you should know about. One of the items for March reads, “Submit chapter achievement award report to director-sponsor.” (NOTE: Because the board meeting takes place late in May, the deadline this year has been extended until April 18 for Region 5 chapters.)

The underlying goal of the chapter achievement award (CAA) program is to encourage chapters to pursue activities that create a healthy chapter. Chapters are healthy when they conduct activities that, among other things, expand community, enrich membership services, provide recognition and leadership opportunities, communicate with members and the community, and relate to Society programs.

These ultimate goals are supported by a sample of activities that appears in the guidelines for the CAA (www.stc.org/PDF_Files/Ad-29-02.pdf). Each year, chapters can tally their activities by checking off items they do that appear in the guidelines. That checklist, along with supporting material, can be submitted to your director-sponsor to qualify for achievement awards. The first level of achievement is a Chapter of Merit; the second level is a Chapter of Excellence, and those chapters who complete most of the requirements in the full list qualify for the third level of achievement – the Chapter of Distinction. Historically, STC has awarded only one award of this level in each of several chapter-size categories. Often, two or more chapters meet the requirements, yet the guidelines state that the Board of Directors can choose only one in each size category.

As a result of this process, the award has come to be thought of as a competition among chapters. Chapter presidents often feel their year of leadership is unsuccessful if they do not bring home this award. Chapters who do win it can become somewhat big-headed, and rather than do events that will enhance a particular chapter’s immediate needs, some chapters’ ultimate goal becomes one of checking off as many activities as possible – sometimes without concern for the quality of those activities.

Not every chapter chooses to join this race. Some chapters, perhaps put off by this frenzy of competition, consider the whole thing too daunting to undertake and ignore the CAA guidelines completely. Other chapters won’t even consider submitting their forms for chapter of merit or excellence, because they believe that if they can’t compete at the distinction level, that they shouldn’t bother at all.

So, why do you look to the CAA guidelines if it’s not to try to win? Because the activities it suggests offer you a roadmap to success. It gives you ideas of things you can aspire to and it awakens thoughts and projects for your chapter that aren’t even on the list! The guidelines say that you can substitute other activities for those that are listed. STC made that provision because your ideas and activities can reach so much further than any list could ever match. When you do something not specifically listed, look to the supporting activity and see if what you are substituting still accomplishes the same overall goal. If it does, you can be sure your director sponsor will approve the substitution!

continued on next page

The CAA guidelines can help your chapter achieve teamwork, cohesiveness, and accomplishment. It can provide targets for those of you who need to be challenged and reinforcement of jobs well done for those of you who can only afford, whether through budget or people-power, to do a select group of activities. In the long run, it is the activities you do well that help you achieve distinction. Give yourself credit where it's due. Gain from knowing what the activities on the guidelines are and reach for them...but do it with grace and professionalism and tailor it to your chapter's needs. Just checking off an item that may have been done hurriedly or poorly won't help the overall goal of the program: to create healthy chapters.

If, as you plan your chapter activities, you choose not to use the guidelines because you do not care for awards or do not believe your chapter could win, look at them again. Don't compete. Use the guidelines as a map to the growth, success, and health of your chapter, not as a means to win an award. And if you qualify for a chapter of merit, or excellence, or even distinction along the way, consider it a bonus. You will have deserved it. ■



Society Announcements

News from the Society

STC@50

This year, the Society is celebrating its Golden Anniversary! The STC@50 Web site (www.stc.org/STC@50/index.htm) is your guide to all the festivities. Select the links on this site to read about the Society's history, the exciting events planned for this celebration, and ways that you and your chapter can participate. Read anecdotes from long-time STC members and visit the "50 Years of Memories" page to share your reminiscences with the Society. Check the Timeline to see how far both STC and technology have come in the last 50 years. Be sure to check the site often, as we'll be adding new links as the anniversary celebration continues to develop.



2003 Tech Comm Stampede

The 2003 Region 5 Conference will be held in Austin, Texas, from October 9 to 12, 2003. Spend your long weekend having fun Austin style! Ride on in to Austin, and enjoy a blazing four days of exhibits, seminars, and workshops. And if you want to go sightseeing, there's so much to do! Come out and spend a few hours or the entire four days. See www.stcaustin.org/confregion5/index.html for details. ■

Newsletter Staff

Editor

Carrie D. Cooper,
coopermail@earthlink.com

Copyeditor

Beth Kane, beth.kane@pearson.com

About the Newsletter

The Border Line is the official publication of the Southern Arizona chapter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC). Issues are published monthly from September to May. The design and layout of this newsletter are copyright STC, 2003.

Submissions

Contributions, book and product reviews, letters, and articles are welcome. We prefer items on topics that are relevant to the field of technical communication. For publication of your first article, you may attend one dinner meeting for free. Your text may be edited to conform to style guidelines and space restrictions of the newsletter. The word *very* shall be killed on contact. The deadline for submissions is the last Friday of each month.

Send submissions by e-mail (Word file or RTF) to the Editor. Include your name and telephone number. By submitting an article, you implicitly grant a license to this newsletter to run the article and you permit other STC publications to reprint it without permission. Unless otherwise noted, authors retain copyright.

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E-mail distribution

To save costs, *The Border Line* is sent via e-mail. To sign up, e-mail the Editor.

About STC

Our Mission..Designing the future of technical communication

The Society for Technical Communication (STC) is the world's largest professional association for anyone whose job involves communicating technical information. STC can be reached by mail at 901 North Stuart Street, Suite 904, Arlington, VA 22203-1822. Phone: (703) 522-4114. Visit STC on the Web at www.stc.org. ■

Chapter Contact Info

Chapter Web site

www.stc-saz.org

Administrative Council

President

Helen Marty, martyh46@msn.com

Vice President

Pat Markey, pat.markey@prodigy.net

Secretary

David Carlson, drcarlson@raytheon.com

Treasurer

Carrie D. Cooper, coopermail@earthlink.com

Immediate Past President

Brenda Huettner, bphuettner@aol.com

Committee Contacts

Chapter contact information for the fiscal year is listed below. If you see *Open*, you could be that person! Contact chapter President Helen Marty (martyh46@msn.com) for more information or to volunteer.

Bylaws Committee

Committee Chair: Pat Markey, pat.markey@prodigy.net

Communications Committee

Community Outreach: Brenda Huettner

Publicity: Sally Adams, sadams@noao.edu

Web page: Dirk J. Arnold, stc@spreck.com

Education Outreach: Open

Election Committee

Contact any member of the Administrative Council

Employment Committee

Job Bank: Bill Rost, bill.rost@misyshealthcare.com

Hospitality Committee

Committee Chair: Lucy Vitale, lblcontentmgmt@netscape.net

Membership Committee

Committee Chair: Judy McCabe, caribe966@aol.com

Member Database: Larry Hammer, larry.hammer@misyshealthcare.com

Newsletter Committee

Committee Chair: *Open*

Newsletter Editor: Carrie D. Cooper, coopermail@earthlink.com

Copyeditor: Beth Kane, beth.kane@pearson.com

Program Committee

Facilities: Beth Kane, beth.kane@pearson.com

Recognitions (Ad hoc)

Committee Chair: Pat Markey, pat.markey@prodigy.net