



# THE BORDER LINE

News from the SOUTHERN ARIZONA CHAPTER



December 2004 • Volume 9, No. 4

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## STC Mission Statement:

Creating and supporting a forum for communities of practice in the profession of technical communication.

The Society for Technical Communication (STC) is the world's largest professional association for anyone whose job involves communicating technical information.

Contact the STC at  
901 N. Stuart St., Suite 904  
Arlington, VA 22203-1822  
Phone: (703) 522-4114  
Web site: [www.stc.org](http://www.stc.org)

## Chapter Meeting Notice

# Happy Holidays – or Stressful Holidays: You Choose.

with Dr. Janina Latack

Dr. Janina Latack will take us through a fun review of ways to create a happy holiday, professionally and personally, and highlight how communication impacts both aspects of this special season.

Dr. Latack is a consultant, speaker and author on career management. In addition to her successful private consulting and executive coaching practice, Dr. Latack has been an adjunct faculty member at the University of Arizona College of Business in the Department of Management and Policy. Before that, she was a faculty member for 13 years in Human Resource Management at the College of Business, Ohio State University. She began her career with the UCLA Career Planning and Placement Center.

This meeting will also have a silent auction in support of our scholarship initiative! It is a great time for early holiday shopping.

## Save the Date: Thursday, Dec. 9, 2004

**Place:** Varsity Clubs of America Suites Hotel, 3855 E Speedway Blvd., in Tucson, Ariz.

**Time:** Registration, 5:30 to 6 p.m.  
Dinner and networking, 6 to 7 p.m.  
Program, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

**Menu:** Chicken Breast with Caper Butter Sauce and Baked Cheese Tortellini with Marinara and Peppers, choice of salads, Scallion Potatoes, Herbed Mixed Vegetables and New York-Style Cheesecake.

**Cost:** *Dinner and program:* STC members \$18; Nonmembers \$20  
*Program only:* Members and nonmembers \$5

*(Nonmembers: Never attended a Southern Arizona chapter meeting? Use the \$5 Off Nonmember Coupon on page 9.)*

**RSVP:** To reserve your spot, send an e-mail message to Pat Markey ([pat.markey@comcast.net](mailto:pat.markey@comcast.net)) by 4 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 7.

No-shows will be billed. Walk-ins are always welcome, but we cannot guarantee a meal.

## Note: Networking Dinner for January

There will be no regular program in January. Instead, we will meet Thursday, Jan. 13 for a casual dinner at Elle on Broadway at Country Club. Contact Kitty Aughey [kaughey@cox.net](mailto:kaughey@cox.net) for reservations or check the Web site at [www.stc-saz.org](http://www.stc-saz.org) for more information. ■



We talked about forming a Tucson FrameMaker users' group in the chapter. If you're interested in participating, come to one of our chapter planning meetings.

## Program Review: A Night at the Round Table

### FrameMaker® Tips and Tricks

By Carrie Cooper, Vice President

On Nov. 11 we had an open forum question-and-answer session about Adobe's FrameMaker software. Speaker **Lin Surasky** has been a technical writer for more than 10 years and a FrameMaker user for nine. The new Varsity Suites Hotel location was favorably received. Attendees liked the location and the buffet.

Although we did not have the correct Macintosh cable for Lin's computer – and a quick trip to the office supply store turned up short – we gained extra networking time while several members tried to get the projector-computer setup to work. As one attendee wrote on the evaluation form, "Lin adapted to the equipment problem like a champ."

She turned her laptop to face us, and she pointed to the screen during the discussion of FrameMaker features. (You know, the old fashioned way, without Microsoft PowerPoint.)

The Q&A format seemed helpful to most of the attendees. Lin took questions from the audience and offered that people mail files to her for troubleshooting. Member and past president **Barbara Fraps** also offered to help others with FrameMaker. We also talked about forming a local FrameMaker users' group in the chapter. (More information will be forthcoming about this; if you're interested, come to one of our chapter planning meetings.)

### FrameMaker Resources and Links

We discussed several resources for learning and using the software:

- [www.frameusers.com](http://www.frameusers.com) is the "world's largest online FrameMaker reference site and community of users" and offers "support, ideas and suggestions"
- Join an e-group of other FrameMaker users, such as the news group called [Comp.Text.Frame](#) on usenet.
- Join the [Tech Whirl](#) list.
- Give yourself a meaningful project to learn the software, such as documenting how to make [Baked Alaska](#) for dessert or writing a manual for your lawnmower.
- **Norma Dodd** was recommended as an excellent teacher but may no longer be actively giving seminars.
- **Sarah S. O'Keefe**, founder and president of Scriptorium Publishing Services, Inc., is an experienced trainer and an Adobe Certified Expert (ACE) in FrameMaker. Sarah's publishing credits include [FrameMaker 7: The Complete Reference](#), [The WebWorks Publisher Cookbook](#), [Technical Writing 101](#), and numerous white papers.

### Comments and Suggestions

We received some valuable suggestions on the evaluation forms. In general, attendees praised Lin's accessible and knowledgeable manner and enjoyed the Q&A. However, opinion on the casual structure was divided: while some found the informal structure valuable, others wanted more structure and a directed presentation. One attendee wrote, "It was a pleasant surprise! I'm glad the PP didn't work because the casual Q&A was very informative." Another suggestion was to "have attendees e-mail questions to speaker in advance." It seems that we could make everyone happy if we "bring Lin back for a more formal workshop," as suggested by a member. 🍀



## President's Message

### Happy Holidays

By Kitty Aughey, Associate Fellow

In the holiday flurry of celebrations, shopping, decorating, baking and continuous dining, it is hard to give much thought to your many "extra" commitments. Our STC chapter has a happy, simplified schedule for December into January. In December, we celebrate with our annual Holiday Party, which is full of fun. We have canceled the December 28 Planning Meeting to free up time for personal celebrations. In January, instead of a meeting, we will hold an informal networking dinner. This informal type of gathering is always well attended and stimulating.

It is okay to put STC-SAZ to the side (for a while).

Chapter activities focusing on the Transformation Process will resume in mid-January. Our chapter was chosen to be in the second wave of rechartering efforts. This is an opportunity to take a new look at our chapter and its offerings to members. I hope many of you will help us in this challenging change endeavor (more about this in the January newsletter).

Please embrace your family and friends and enjoy the holidays together with hearts full of happiness, peace, and good will. ■



## Editor's Notes

### Engage Your Future

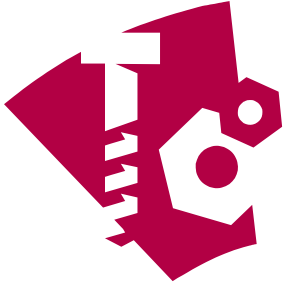
All topics we present here are for our growth. There is no better way to improve ourselves than to actively participate in our future. Technical communication and writing is making many top-ten lists of growth professions, whether it's your first or second one. We are constantly learning. One of the best ways to learn is to teach and to participate in activities with others who share our interests.

Last month I asked for tips or tricks anyone might know that would be particularly useful for others. I did not receive any local tips, but I have not given up hope. I did find some information about how to use conditional text in FrameMaker in an article from the Orange County STC newsletter, *TechniScribe*, which is included in this issue.

Elections for the society and for our chapter are coming up in March and April. **Brenda Huettner** has written an article about how to determine your voting strategies for the society positions. Future issues of this newsletter will discuss how you can be involved in our chapter's activities by running as a candidate or accepting a position on a committee.

There is tremendous value in belonging to a group that shares your interest. There is even more value in participating in local chapter activities. STC has restructured its dues to provide you with various membership options. **Judy McCabe** explains your options clearly in a table format. I have included an article from *Tieline* about how to deduct STC dues from your taxes.

So, make a New Year's resolution to help us plan and conduct our programs. Share your insights and knowledge with us by [attending programs](#). You can also help by attending our monthly [planning meetings](#) or contributing to the newsletter. ■



Reprinted from  
*TechniScribe*, Nov.  
2004, the Orange  
County STC newsletter

## Tools

# FrameMaker Tips

By Mary Ann Howell, Senior Member, Orange County chapter

## Conditional Text

Conditional text is FrameMaker's most powerful tool for single sourcing. It's simple to set up, and even simpler to use – yet I still meet many FrameMaker users who haven't yet given it a go.

If you have documents (perhaps supporting similar products) that have a lot of the same content, but with maybe 30 percent or less content difference between documents, you can save a lot of time with the caring and feeding of one document instead of two or more.

The text that differs is marked with a specially named tag. This marked text is the conditional text. When you are ready to publish, you choose which version to publish by choosing which conditions to view and which conditions to hide. Any text that is free of condition tags shows up in all versions. You can use condition tags for graphics, tables, and text.

### ***Strategy for Conditional Text:***

- Set up the conditional tags.
- Apply the conditional tags to the unique text.
- Display and print the version you want.

### ***Setting Up Two Conditional Tags***

1. Open the Conditional Text dialog box:
  - . From the **Special** menu, select **Conditional Text**.
  - . The Conditional Text dialog box appears.
2. Click **Edit Condition Tag**.
  - . The Edit Condition Tag dialog box appears.
3. Fill in the fields:
  - . **Tag** – type a descriptive name, e.g., “Acme Only.”
  - . **Style** – choose an underline style for viewing while editing.
  - . **Color** – choose a color for viewing while editing.
4. Click **Set**.
  - . The Conditional Text dialog box returns.
5. Click **Edit Condition Tag** again.
  - . The Edit Condition Tag dialog box appears.
6. Fill in the fields:
  - . **Tag** – type another descriptive name, e.g., “Ajax Only.”
  - . **Style** – choose a different underline style for viewing while editing.
  - . **Color** – choose a different color for viewing while editing.
7. Click **Set**.
  - . The Conditional Text dialog box reappears.

### ***Assigning a Condition to Text***

1. Highlight the text unique to one version.
2. In the Conditional Text dialog box
  - Click the tag that you want to assign.
  - Click the arrow button to move the tag into the **In** field.
  - Click **Apply**.
  - . The text is conditional and is displayed only when that condition is selected.

### **Viewing or Printing Only One Version**

1. In the Conditional Text dialog box, click **Show/Hide**.
  - . The Show/Hide Conditional Text dialog box appears.
2. Double-click the tag that you want to move into the **Show** section.
3. Clear the **Show Indicators** check box if you want normal text for printing.
4. Click **Set**.
  - . Only the version you chose is displayed. Only the version that is displayed will print.

### **Assigning Tags with Ctrl 4**

1. Highlight the text unique to one version and press **Ctrl 4**.
  - . At the bottom left of your screen the first tag in the tag list appears.
2. If that's not the right tag, type in the first few letters of the tag that you want.
  - . The tag appears in the bottom left of your screen.
3. Press **Enter**.
  - . The highlighted text is now conditional. When your cursor is in conditional text, the tag name is displayed at the bottom of your screen.

### **Removing Tags with Ctrl 6**

- . Highlight the text and press **Ctrl 6**. (Don't press **Enter** this time or you'll delete your text.) The text is now normal and appears in all views. ✚



## Chapter News

### **The Buzz at STC-SAZ**

#### **Rechartering**

Our chapter has been approved for rechartering under the new STC transformation guidelines. **Kitty Aughey** will be presenting the information to us at our planning meetings as she receives it. This is an exciting time to help shape our future. Please join us at the planning meetings and share your insights.

#### **New Member Packets**

**Judy McCabe** has created packets for potential members, which she will distribute at our program meetings. If you would like extra packets, please contact Judy at [caribe966@aol.com](mailto:caribe966@aol.com). ✚

#### **Juvenile Diabetes Walk**

On Nov. 6 on behalf of STC, **Brenda Huettner** and her family participated in the Juvenile Diabetes Walk, which was held on the University of Arizona campus. Although the information was released to us too late to encourage others to join, our chapter wants to support this annual event again next year. The pledges are not keyed to the distance you walk, so anyone can help in the effort. ✚



## Society News

### **Annual Conference Preliminary Program**

STC's 52nd Annual Conference will take place May 8-11, 2005, in Seattle, Wash. All STC members will receive a copy of the Preliminary Program, which includes registration forms, information on technical sessions, conference transportation contacts, and other information designed to help plan for the conference. ✚



**From the STC.ORG  
official call for  
candidates:**

**All candidates must be  
senior members.**

- Candidates for second vice president must have extensive leadership experience, preferably in positions at the Society level.
- Candidates for treasurer should have strong communication skills and leadership experience at the chapter or regional level.
- Candidates for director-sponsor should have a history of successful STC leadership, preferably at the chapter or regional level.
- Nominating committee candidates should have excellent judgment about people and wide acquaintance with members at all levels of the Society.

## Feature Article

# Your Voice Matters

## Make Your Vote Count!

By Brenda Huettner, Associate Fellow

As we've seen recently in other elections, every vote is important to candidates running for office. It's no different within STC. Our organization is run by a board of directors that you, the membership, elect each year. Please take the time to learn about the candidates, make an informed decision and, most important, VOTE!

### Learn about the Candidates

One of the great things about STC is the generosity and helpfulness of its members. Feel free to talk to any candidate, and ask the questions that are on your mind. They may not know all the answers, but they should be able to point you in the right direction. And if they're going to be an STC leader, you'll want to know how they handle inquiries from the membership (that's you!)

Any candidate on an STC slate will have either an officially published biography or a statement of qualifications. Some will also have Web sites or published articles in STC or other publications. Read what they've written – it can tell you a lot about the candidate and about the issues they think are important. Use the [www.stc.org](http://www.stc.org) site to search within publications for articles that have appeared in *Intercom*, *Tieline*, or on STC Web pages. Or check the *Technical Communication* journal archives at [www.techcomm-online.org/cgi-bin/advancedsearch](http://www.techcomm-online.org/cgi-bin/advancedsearch). For local or regional articles, start with the candidate's chapter and look at their newsletters. You can also look at other chapter sites within the region. If the candidate has ties to any of the SIGs, you can check the SIG pages at [www.stcsig.org](http://www.stcsig.org) for archives of list messages, Web content, and newsletters. Or you can use a commercial search engine – many STC community sites will come up if you search using engines like Google and Yahoo.

Another good way to learn about candidates is to talk to people you know. You've heard of the "six degrees of separation?" In an organization like STC, it's even less – you probably already know someone who personally knows each candidate (that's only two degrees). Ask around, talk to people in your STC community. Find out which candidates the people you trust are endorsing.

### Make an Informed Decision

Once you've heard what the candidates have to say, consider each candidate's record of contributions to the Society. Have they participated in local, regional, or society activities? Do they have a successful record of leadership? Have they been recognized for their work (as in the publications, art, or online competitions) or for their contributions to the Society (as in chapter, SIG, and society-level achievement and service awards)?

You'll also want to consider whether the candidate's position on controversial issues matches your own. Remember, the candidate you elect will be making decisions for all of us, often for several years.

### VOTE!

You'll be getting a ballot in the mail from the STC office in March, and you have until April 15 to respond.

It's easy to vote – just mark the ballot and mail it back. There's also an online voting option. 🗳️



## Networking

# STC Phoenix Chapter News

## December Meeting

Join Phoenix chapter members Tuesday, Dec. 14 for their 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual December Jam. From the Phoenix chapter Web site:

“Are you looking for a fun, lighthearted break in the midst of the holiday season madness? Join us for our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual December Jam. Chapter members will strut their stuff for your entertainment. We have singers, musicians, poets, storytellers, and comedians among us, and our December meeting will be their chance to shine!”

For more information, visit the Phoenix Web site, [www.stc-phoenix.com](http://www.stc-phoenix.com). 🍷



## Membership News

# Time to Renew Your Valuable STC Membership

By Judy McCabe, Membership

Members who have not renewed their membership online at [www.stc.org](http://www.stc.org) will soon receive—or may have already—printed invoices sent by way of the U.S. Postal Service. For membership dues, STC accepts checks and American Express, MasterCard, and VISA payments. Dues payments must be received by Jan. 1, 2005. (A grace period extends to Feb. 28, 2005.) Note that only members who have paid their dues by Feb. 28 will be eligible to vote in the STC election.

Renewal for 2005 allows members to choose one of four new individual membership categories. All memberships include full access to the members-only area of the STC Web site.

Category	Receives <i>Intercom</i> and <i>Technical Communication</i>		Chapter and SIG* Affiliation	Rate	
	Printed Copy	Online Access		Renewal	New Member
<b>Classic</b>	Yes	Yes	1 chapter and 1 SIG <b>OR</b> 3 SIGs	\$145	\$160 (includes \$15 enrollment fee)
<b>E-member-ship</b>	No	Yes	1 chapter and 1 SIG <b>OR</b> 3 SIGs	\$135	\$150 (includes \$15 enrollment fee)
<b>Limited</b>	Yes	Yes	None	\$125	\$140 (includes \$15 enrollment fee)
<b>Student**</b>	No	Yes	2 chapters and unlimited SIGs	\$50	\$50 (no enrollment fee)
<b>Classic</b>	Yes	Yes	1 chapter and 1 SIG <b>OR</b> 3 SIGs	\$145	\$160 (includes \$15 enrollment fee)

\* Special Interest Group. Classic and E-memberships may join additional SIGs for \$5 per SIG and additional chapters for \$10 per chapter.

\*\* Student member applicants must be (1) enrolled in an accredited university, college, community college, or technical school; (2) be considered a full-time student according to the criteria of the school he or she is attending; and (3) preparing for a career in technical communication. Student members have no voting rights in STC elections.





Reprinted from *Tieline*,  
November 2004.

## Society Report

### U.S. Members: Deduct Your STC Dues

If you pay taxes in the United States, keep in mind that STC dues are tax deductible. Please note that *dues must be deducted from the tax return filed for the year in which they were paid*. In other words, dues paid in 2004 may be deducted only from 2004 tax returns. Therefore, if you pay your 2005 dues on or before December 31, 2004, these dues can be deducted only from your 2004 return. Members who have questions should contact their local IRS office or their accountant. While dues, contributions, and out-of-pocket expenses may be deducted, personal services may not.

You can claim dues as a deduction in several ways: as a charitable expense, a business expense, or a miscellaneous deduction.

#### Charitable Expense

All STC members who pay taxes in the United States can deduct at least a portion of their STC dues if they claim this portion as a charitable donation. IRS publications 526 (rev. 2003) and 17 define this option:

*You may be able to deduct membership fees or dues you pay to a qualified organization. However, you can deduct only the amount that is more than the value of the benefits you receive.*

As a 501(c)(3) organization, STC is a qualified organization. To determine the amount of charitable contribution you may claim, subtract the cost of tangible benefits you receive from STC from the amount of dues you paid in 2004. STC's tangible benefits can be estimated at \$30 per year: \$15 for the Society's quarterly journal, *Technical Communication*, and \$15 for the magazine, *Intercom*.

STC's prorated dues system, as well as the new membership categories approved by the board of directors for 2005, might affect the amount of charitable contribution you may claim. When calculating your charitable contribution, consider the following factors:

##### **For 2004 Dues**

For most members, 2004 dues are \$140. However, some members received prorated credit, based on the month they joined STC, that decreased their dues.

##### **For 2005 Dues**

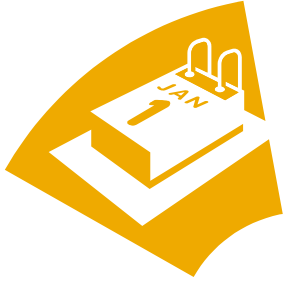
If you pay your 2005 dues on or before December 31, 2004, you can claim them as a deduction on your 2004 return. The amount of your dues for 2005 depends on the membership category you select: classic, limited, student, or e-membership. Classic members and limited members determine their charitable contribution by subtracting the cost of tangible benefits (\$30) from the cost of dues (\$145 for classic members, \$125 for limited members). Because student members and e-members do not receive printed versions of *Technical Communication* or *Intercom*, they do not receive tangible benefits, and may deduct the full amount of dues for 2005: \$135 for e-members and \$50 for student members. Some members also receive prorated credit, based on the month they joined STC, that decreases their 2005 dues.

#### Business Expense

Employers and self-employed consultants may claim the full amount of dues as a business expense.

#### Miscellaneous Deduction

Those who do not fall into the categories defined above may claim the amount of dues as a miscellaneous deduction. (For miscellaneous deductions to affect taxes, the total amount of miscellaneous deductions must exceed 2 percent of your adjusted gross income.) ■



## Clip and Save

# Chapter Program Schedule

Programs are held on the **second Thursday** of each month in Tucson, Ariz.

**New meeting location** effective November 2004: Varsity Clubs Of America Suites Hotel, 3855 E Speedway Blvd. (northwest corner of Speedway and Alvernon)

- **October 14, 2004:** Career perspectives from new writer to seasoned vet. This is our last meeting at the Courtyard by Marriott.
- **November 11, 2004:** Lin Surasky, FrameMaker Tips and Tricks. See meeting announcement on page 1.
- **December 9, 2004:** Janina Latack, Stress Management, plus annual holiday party and silent auction.
- **January 13, 2005:** NEW! Casual networking dinner (no program) at Elle – A Wine Country Restaurant – 3048 E. Broadway (at Country Club).
- **February 10, 2005:** Avon Murphy, What new technical communication books tell us about our profession.
- **March 10, 2005:** NEW! Christine Abbott, CYA for Tech Writers.
- **April 14, 2005:** Content Management. .
- **May 19, 2005:** Awards and Recognitions. Location TBD.

The program schedule is subject to change without notice; for up-to-date meeting information, visit [www.stc-saz.org](http://www.stc-saz.org).

## Chapter Planning Meeting Schedule

All chapter members are invited to join the executive council and committee heads at the monthly planning meetings. Come participate in the way the chapter is run! You'll have an opportunity to express your opinion and learn about the inner workings of our chapter.

October 26, 2004	February 22, 2005	Saturday, June 4, 2005
November 23, 2004	March 22, 2005	(for 2005-2006)
December 28, canceled	April 26, 2005	Location TBD
January 25, 2005	May 24, 2005	

Regular planning meetings are held in the café at Barnes and Noble on Broadway (east of Swan) at 6 p.m. on the **fourth Tuesday** of the month. 🍷

Don't belong to the STC yet? Want to just check out our chapter? Clip 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 the 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: \_\_\_\_\_



## Opportunities for Education

### Highlighting Hazards: Mastering Warnings and Error Messages

This is the next topic in the series of STC phone seminars.

Watch out! Are there hidden hazards in your user documents? Do you know when and where your product documentation should include a hazard? What about the difference between Danger, Warning, and Caution? What kind of text and graphic labels work best? Are hazards the same in hardware and software documentation? Do color and placement influence user compliance? Do hazards change for localization projects? And do the users even notice hazards?

- **Presenter:** Leah Guren
- **Date:** Wednesday, Dec. 8 | 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Mountain Standard Time
- **Seminar Type:** Telephone
- **Seminar Level:** All Levels
- **Seminar Cost:** \$99 STC Members; \$149 Nonmembers

With all seminars, the cost is per site, not per person. For more information, visit the STC Web site, <http://www.stc.org/seminars.asp>.

### Preemptive Project Planning

This is the first of two STC phone-Web seminars in January, so you can plan ahead.

No one likes surprises, especially if those surprises mean more work. This presentation will teach you how to spot upcoming projects before they sneak up on you. You'll learn to prepare for these projects, avoid those nerve-wracking schedule crunches, and look like a hero in the process!

- **Presenter:** John Hedtke
- **Date:** Wednesday, Jan. 12 | 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Mountain Standard Time
- **Seminar Type:** Web-Telephone
- **Seminar Level:** All Levels
- **Seminar Cost:** \$99 STC Members; \$149 Nonmembers

With all seminars, the cost is per site, not per person. For more information, visit the STC Web site, <http://www.stc.org/seminars.asp>.

### Conference for Adobe Photoshop Users

In case you can still squeeze this opportunity into your schedule, here it is again.

Here is a chance to learn about a new tool or to improve your skills. CompuMaster is bringing a full-day conference to Tucson in December. The conference uses a two-track format, one for basics and one for tips and tricks for professionals, with 10 separate sessions. The topics cover:

- How to get the most out of Photoshop tools
- Tips on cutting your production time
- Ways you can avoid the techno-glitches
- How to produce special effects

Basic registration information:

- **Date:** Dec. 17, 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.
- **Cost:** \$199 per person or \$189 for four or more people.

If you are interested in attending as a group, e-mail **Brenda Huettner** at [bphuettner@aol.com](mailto:bphuettner@aol.com). For more information about the conference, visit the Web site at <http://www.compumaster.net/SemDetail.html?ST=CMCONPS&dCat=Deskt>. 🗨



Linda Oestreich

## Director's News

### Ascending the Summit

By Linda Oestreich, Region 5 Director-Sponsor

The Region 5 2004 conference was held in Salt Lake City Oct. 21–24. Although the group wasn't huge (we had about 95 folks there), it was perfect! The program had a great mix of high-tech, low-tech, management and skill-based presentations. The facilities were superb, and the city, despite a day of rain, rewarded us with fair skies and crisp, fall weather that invigorated our minds and hearts.

My three years as your director-sponsor will be completed in May, so this regional conference was the last one that I can call "mine." The little Intermountain STC community did an incredible amount of work, but in true Region 5 spirit, they had some help. Folks from Southern Arizona, Lone Star, Utah State, and BYU STC communities all lent a hand in making the conference a success. When all was said and done, however, the person who made sure that it all worked smoothly was Marj Hermansen-Eldard. Marj is quite a force in the Utah STC arena and works miracles more often than most. I also want to thank Melissa Jessop, the president of Intermountain STC, for agreeing to take on this challenge and for helping see it to fruition.

Salt Lake City is a beautiful place, and the Prime Hotel is comfortable, elegant, and on the free tramline. Folks could jump on a tram and travel all over downtown Salt Lake City for free! The Delta Center (where the Utah Jazz basketball team plays) was only a 5-minute walk from the hotel, and several folks at the conference got tickets to see them play on Friday night. Rather than attend the game, I went to Z-Tejas for dinner with a small group. Below is a picture of our Friday night crew. (You can tell we were definitely having fun!)



The picture shows folks from seven chapters, four regions, and the STC office! From left to right in the back row are Louellen Coker (Lone Star), Bob Johnson (Kachina), Brenda Huettner (Southern Arizona), Jackie Damrau (Lone Star), and Maurice Martin (STC editor of *Intercom*); front row: John Stikar (Kachina), Suzanna Laurent (Oklahoma, STC first VP), Jon Baker (Boston, Region 1 director), me (San Diego, Region 5 director), and Rahel Bailie (Canada West Coast, Region 7 director).

Regional conferences give me a chance to relax, have great networking opportunities and attend sessions! At this conference, I attended presentations on instructional design, writing corporate style guides, developing metrics, and preparing online portfolios. In addition, I presented a session about moving from commodity writing to strategic thinker and delivered a closing session about the STC transformation. ■

## About the Newsletter

### Editor

Pat Markey:  
[pat.markey@comcast.net](mailto:pat.markey@comcast.net)

### Copy Editors

DeAnn Drottz:  
[chemist@c2i2.com](mailto:chemist@c2i2.com)  
Judy McCabe:  
[caribe966@aol.com](mailto:caribe966@aol.com)

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## Chapter Contacts

### Administrative Council

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Kitty Aughey: [kaughey@cox.net](mailto:kaughey@cox.net)

#### Vice President

Carrie Cooper: [carrie.cooper@acs-inc.com](mailto:carrie.cooper@acs-inc.com)

#### Secretary

Robert Epstein: [n7eg@mindspring.com](mailto:n7eg@mindspring.com)

#### Treasurer

Richard Cook: [rcook6701@yahoo.com](mailto:rcook6701@yahoo.com)

#### Immediate Past President

Pat Markey: [pat.markey@comcast.net](mailto:pat.markey@comcast.net)

## Committee Contacts

### Bylaws Committee

Chair – Barbara Fraps: [bfraps@cox.net](mailto:bfraps@cox.net)

### Communication, Community Outreach, and Competitions Committees

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Newsletter – Pat Markey: [pat.markey@comcast.net](mailto:pat.markey@comcast.net)

Newsletter Copy Editors – DeAnn Drottz: [chemist@c2i2.com](mailto:chemist@c2i2.com)  
and Judy McCabe: [caribe966@aol.com](mailto:caribe966@aol.com)

PR/Publicity – Open

Web Site – Jutta Holzhaus: [stc@ultrasw.com](mailto:stc@ultrasw.com)

### Education Outreach Committee

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### Election and Nominating Committee

Chair – Pat Markey: [pat.markey@comcast.net](mailto:pat.markey@comcast.net)

Committee – Bill Rost: [Bill.Rost@misyshealthcare.com](mailto:Bill.Rost@misyshealthcare.com)  
and Dave Carlson: [drcarlson@raytheon.com](mailto:drcarlson@raytheon.com)

### Membership Committee

Chair – Judy McCabe: [caribe966@aol.com](mailto:caribe966@aol.com)

Membership Assistant – Gabrielle Burns: [gurns@breault.com](mailto:gurns@breault.com)

Database – Richard Cook: [rcook6701@yahoo.com](mailto:rcook6701@yahoo.com)

Employment – Paul Veverka: [paul.veverka@misyshealthcare.com](mailto:paul.veverka@misyshealthcare.com)

ListServ – Judy McCabe: [caribe966@aol.com](mailto:caribe966@aol.com)

### Program Committee

Chair – Carrie Cooper: [carrie.cooper@acs-inc.com](mailto:carrie.cooper@acs-inc.com)

Facilities – Pat Markey: [pat.markey@comcast.net](mailto:pat.markey@comcast.net)

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