



Welcome members

The following new members recently joined the Southern Arizona chapter:

- **Terry Weber**
- **Michael Wise**

The time to **renew** your membership is growing short. If you do not renew before February, it will be necessary to reinstate your membership.

Do you demonstrate "TeamWisdom"?

By Christopher M. Avery, Ph.D

Put yourself to the test, and see if you're taking responsibility for your team's success.

TeamWisdom is a set of individual skills and behaviors that leads to highly responsible and productive relationships at work. To learn if you've got it, read each pair of statements below and check "A" or "B" as being most true for you.

1. A ___ I take personal responsibility for the success of my team experience.
B ___ I make excuses or blame others when my team doesn't succeed on a task or assignment.
2. A ___ I ask myself and my teammates, "What has our team been formed to do?"
B ___ I expect my team leader or teammates to tell me my role on the team, then leave me alone to do it. If a team member doesn't do his part, it's not my problem.

See **TeamWisdom**, page 4 ...

Join us January 17

Portfolio tips and feedback

A panel discussion

Your work portfolio presents your best face to your potential customer or employer. A panel of experts will provide advice, tips, and feedback on this important aspect of your resumé at the January meeting. Bring samples from your portfolio to the meeting to receive an informal critique, as time allows. The panel consists of:

Dirk Arnold is a multimedia designer at Captaris who has won recognition from STC for his multimedia product demos. He specializes in Macromedia Flash development and Web site design, and he has a background in graphic design, printing, film making, and architecture.

Barbara Fraps started the documentation group at Global Atmospherics, Inc., in 1995. During her six years as manager for the group, she has hired eight people to fill either temporary or permanent technical writing and technical illustrating positions. To select those employees, she screened over 80 resumes and interviewed 25-30 people, many of whom provided portfolios.

Karen Thure has worked as a technical writer and manager for 17 years. She has also published two books and 19 magazine articles, mainly in Arizona Highways. Currently director of creative services at California-based KnowledgeTree Systems, she provides technical communication services to clients all over the U.S. and Canada.

Meeting details

When	Thursday, January 17
Where	New Location Courtyard Marriott 201 S. Williams Boulevard (In the Williams Center, near Broadway and Craycroft.)
Registration	5:30 - 6 p.m.
Dinner	Italian buffet 6 - 7 p.m.
Program	7 - 8 p.m.
Cost	\$15 members, \$20 nonmembers \$5 program only

To RSVP or to get more information, contact Pat Markey at pat.markey@prodigy.net.

Reserve by 4 p.m. Monday, January 14.

No-shows will be billed, and walk-ins are always welcome! (A meal is not guaranteed to walk-ins.)

The mission of the Southern Arizona chapter of the Society for Technical Communication is to elevate the technical communication professions, increase public awareness of these professions, and serve as a resource to members.



About the newsletter

The Border Line is the official publication of the Southern Arizona chapter of the Society for Technical Communication.

Contributions

Contributions are welcome. Send mail to sarahbonati@captaris.com, or phone 320-7029. Include your name and telephone number with your submission.

For the publication of your first article, you'll be attending the Southern Arizona STC program of your choice as a guest of the chapter (workshops excluded).

Your submission should be factual, original, not previously published, and relevant to the field of technical communication; for example, describing tools, techniques, or tips for communicators.

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. With your submission, please notify the editor if the article has run elsewhere and if it has been submitted for consideration to other publications.

The newsletter editor determines the submissions that are appropriate for publication. We reserve the right to edit your text to conform to the style guidelines and space restrictions of the newsletter.

The deadline for time-sensitive submissions is the first day of each month.

Reprints

Reprints of *The Border Line* are not available, but back issues can be viewed at the chapter Web site.

Chapter limits newsletter mailing

The Border Line is mailed to nonmembers as a courtesy of the chapter. To keep mailing and printing costs down, the chapter will send newsletters to nonmembers for three months only.

If you are not a member and you want to continue receiving news of the Southern Arizona chapter, contact membership manager Judy McCabe at 806-3276 (work) or 546-9004 (home), or mccabe@mmsi.com. Or, join online at the STC Web site: <http://www.stc-va.org>.

Receive *The Border Line* via e-mail

To save paper, printing, and postage costs, *The Border Line* is available via e-mail in PDF format.

To sign up for this service, send a message to Sarah Bonati at sarahbonati@captaris.com.

Chapter contacts

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Administrative and program planning meetings for the chapter occur the first Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at Barnes & Noble Café at Broadway and Rosemont. Members are welcome to participate.

Society contacts

Society for Technical Communication

Designing the future of technical communication

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Society plans telephone seminars

STC telephone seminars have been successful in bringing cost-effective training to STC members and others seeking to improve their skills and knowledge.

Telephone seminars are much like a large conference call. Dial the 800 number from your telephone, enter the provided personal identification number, and you're connected. Sit back, listen to the presentation, and join in the discussion.

For the cost of one registration, several employees at a company can attend and participate.

Seminars scheduled for spring 2002 are:

- January 16. "Building a Product, Manual, and Web Site Using Customer-Focused Design" with Basil White.
- January 30. "Developing a Strategic Framework for Technical Marketing Communication" with Sandra Harner and Tom Zimmerman.
- February 6. "From World-Weary to World-Ready: Usability for International Users" with Hans Fenstermacher.
- February 20. "Creating Effective Documentation Plans" with John Hedtke.
- March 6. "Communicating Clarity: Make your Technical Marketing Matter" with Pamela Selker Rak.
- March 20. "Creating Usability Goals: Understanding What Usability Means to Your Users" with Whitney Quesenbery.

The cost for each seminar is \$125, with an additional \$10 charged for registration received less than five days before the seminar.

Get more information and register online at www.stc.org/seminars.html.

Attribution note

"Are you playing too small a game?" appeared in the December issue of *The Border Line* and "Do you demonstrate TeamWisdom?" appears in this month's issue by permission of the author Christopher M. Avery, Ph.D. Avery is the author of *Teamwork Is an Individual Skill: Getting Your Work Done When Sharing Responsibility* (Berrett-Koehler, 2001) and is the president of Partnerwerks (www.partnerwerks.com).

STC 2001-2002 schedule

Events are in Tucson unless noted

January 8	Education Outreach committee meeting, 6:30 p.m. Barnes & Noble Café at Broadway and Rosemont
January 8	Phoenix chapter Pre-emptive Project Planning with John Hedtke
January 17	Portfolio Tips and Feedback, a panel discussion
February 12	Phoenix chapter How to Deal with Recruiters and Negotiate Compensation with Andrew Davis
February 14	Topic TBD with technical communication recruiter and career consultant Andrew Davis of Synergistec Communications
March 12	Phoenix chapter XML: Why and When? with Phebe Packer and Jim Cox
March 21	Whine and Cheese
April 9	Phoenix chapter Indexing with a Vengeance with Bonni Graham
April 18	The Changing Role of the Technical Communicator with Andrea Ames, past president of the Silicon Valley chapter
April 20	Prepare for the Future: Professional Development, Skills, Tools, and Industry Predictions for Technical Communicators, a half-day workshop with Andrea Ames
May 5-8	STC international conference in Nashville
May 14	Phoenix chapter A Book of Your Own: How to Write and Publish It with Jim Morgan

For meeting details, go to
<http://www.stc-saz.org>

For Phoenix meetings, go to
<http://www.stc-phoenix.com>



Technical communicators are unique volunteers

By Brenda Huettner, chapter president

Winter here in the Old Pueblo may not have snow (and sleet and ice storms — yuk!) but that doesn't stop us from enjoying the caring and sharing that is so much a part of the holiday season.

I've written before about the myriad benefits you can get from volunteering with STC. For those of you looking for a way to give back to the community at large, I'd like to suggest a few charities that could use your technical communication expertise now and year-round.

Literacy Volunteers of America

Our country has a shocking number of people who cannot read or write well enough to perform simple tasks like filling out an application or reading a label. Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) matches volunteer tutors with people who need help improving their literacy skills to functional levels. You can help by volunteering to be a tutor, which requires two tutor training sessions and a commitment of two hours per week. (You may have seen LVA fundraisers giftwrapping books at Barnes and Noble stores in December.)

For more information, call (520) 882-8006 or go to tucsonreads@hotmail.com or <http://www.literacyvolunteers.org>.

SeniorNet

This non-profit organization is dedicated to helping senior citizens become computer-literate in order to bring older adults access to technology and to empower them to share their knowledge and

wisdom. The Tucson chapter holds classes on computers donated by IBM, with donated network and Internet connections. They've expanded to two Tucson locations and are always looking for volunteer instructors. Classes run in five-week sessions.

For more information, call (520) 721-7591 or go to <http://www.tucsonseniornet.org>.

Outdoor Confidence

Outdoor Confidence is a non-profit educational program that teaches survival-skill fishing and camping to disadvantaged youth living in Tucson. They are currently looking for people to help write grant proposals, public relations materials, and Web content.

For more information, call (520) 884-9394 or go to <http://www.outdoorconfidence.com>.

Find something that interests you, and see what you can do to help. Contact your schools, religious organizations, museums and parks, anything that interests you. Offer to work on a newsletter (I know they are always looking for content!), Web site, training program, whatever you can.

If you can't think of anything you'd like to do, or an organization to do it for, here are Web sites that list volunteer needs all around Tucson:

- VolunteerMatch.org lets you enter your Zip code and the distance you're willing to travel.
- VolunteerTucson.org lists volunteer opportunities by categories (such as helping adults, children, animals).

TeamWisdom, continued ...

3. A _____ I take an active interest in what motivates my teammates, as well as think about and share what winning as a team means to me.

B _____ I think our team members' interests and motivations are our manager or team leader's concern, not my concern.

4. A _____ I only make agreements that I fully intend to keep. If a teammate breaks an agreement, I call him on it and explain how important agreements are to me and our team.

B _____ My teammates can't predict whether I'll follow through on my agreements. And who knows whether they'll keep their agreements?

5. A _____ I make certain that our team is energized by clear and bold goals that unite and stretch us.

B _____ I think goal setting is a waste of time and energy, and I simply want to get to work.

Did you check more "A" or "B" statements? If you checked more "A" statements, your TeamWisdom allows you to get more done with less time and energy, earn more, attain satisfaction, and even transform your workplace. If you checked more "B" statements, you lack TeamWisdom and often frustrate yourself and others and cost your company money.

To start increasing your TeamWisdom this week, from the above test, determine your greatest opportunity to improve your demonstration of TeamWisdom and take it.



Book gives guidance for moving from good to great

By Jennifer Square, co-founder of Idea Watch, squarej@ohiohills.com

People are not your most important asset. The right people are.

Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great*

Good to Great is the most recent book by Jim Collins. Collins is a co-author of *Built to Last* and a former Stanford faculty member. He now has his own management research laboratory.

In *Good to Great*, Jim Collins and a team of researchers took five years to explore what it takes to move a company from good to great. They focused their study on 11 companies that attained extraordinary results. These companies averaged cumulative stock returns 6.9 times the general market in the 15 years following their transitional points.

The companies were Abbott, Circuit City, Fannie Mae, Gillette, Kimberly-Clark, Kroger, Nucor, Phillip Morris, Pitney Bowes, Walgreens, and Wells Fargo. These companies woke up one day partway through life and realized that they're good, but not great. So how did they work their way to great?

Here are some highlights of how these companies accomplished it:

- Become a Level 5 leader. This person builds greatness through a paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will.
- Ask "first who ... then what." Executives first got the right people on the bus before setting direction. If you get the right people on the bus, the right people will figure out where to take the bus. This is nothing new, but rigor to this process is. Be rigorous and steadfast. The book offers tips for people decisions.
- Confront the brutal facts. Let the truth be heard. Understand the difference between having your say and the opportunity to be heard. The book offers four basic practices to create a climate where the truth is heard.
- Create a culture of discipline. Build a culture around the idea of freedom and responsibility, within a framework. Fill that culture with self-disciplined people who are willing to go to extreme lengths to fulfill their responsibilities.

- Are you a hedgehog? Understand the hedgehog concept and the three circles. Hedgehogs simplify a complex world into a single, organizing idea, a basic principle or concept that unifies and guides everything. They understand that the essence of profound insight is simplicity.

The hedgehog concept is a simple one that flows from deep understanding about the intersection of the following three circles:

- What can you be the best in the world at
- What drives your economic engine
- What are you deeply passionate about
- Use technology as an accelerator of momentum, not as a creator of it.
- Understand the Flywheel and the Doom Loop. Good-to-great transformations never happened in one fell swoop. It was a cumulative process: step-by-step. Good-to-great leaders spent essentially no time on "aligning," "motivating the troops," or "managing change."
- Lead your work by questions: Does your work align with your own personal three circles?
- Get involved in something that you care so much about that you want to make it the greatest it possibly can be, not because of what you will get, but just because it can be done. It doesn't have to be your business life.

If you want a quick read, the book offers a "Key Points" section after each chapter.

As you read *Good to Great*, it's helpful to ask yourself, "How does this apply to me?"

Even though you may or may not be an executive at your company, you can still take away some good tips and insights from Collins' study.

As Collins would suggest, start with questions: How can you move from being a good manager to being a great manager? How can your staff move from being a good documentation department to being a great documentation department?

Your answers may open a whole new realm of possibilities and change.





Leaders light the way

By J. Suzanna Laurent, region 5 director-sponsor
slaurent@prodigy.net

Introducing candidates for regional director-sponsor

It is my great pleasure to introduce the two candidates for director-sponsor for region 5 in the upcoming election. Director-sponsors serve the region for three years. The election will occur in March.

Suzanna Laurent

Tom Barnett, Phoenix chapter

It is a great honor to be a candidate for director-sponsor. That honor is accentuated by the fact that region 5 has the best STC chapters of any region in the world (proven year-in and year-out by the numerous awards the region accumulates every year).

I have thoroughly enjoyed helping people in STC for nearly 12 years, and the people who know me know that I love STC.

As a critical link in the communication chain of the Society, the position requires a number of communication skills. One, responding to inquiries in a timely and sufficient manner has always been a strength of mine. My years working with the Society office through managing committees and working on them have given me insights into the communication avenues of the Society and the operations of the office. As a very experienced chapter board veteran, I've participated and advised chapter presidents and boards for nearly 11 years.

Director-sponsors play a key role in promoting the overall objectives of the Society (and thereby help chapters become successful), and they should have insights on leadership; provide advice about problems, procedures, and requirements; and help chapters meet their members' needs.

Experience of mine in this area that will prove helpful includes: authoring a chapter strategic plan, participating in two mission statement rewrites, constructing a position description document for a chapter board, creating an initial board decision record document, and managing a bylaws committee in rewriting chapter bylaws. Last year, I

created a Web site for leadership and one for STC bylaws (see the link at the end of this article).

As a chapter bylaws committee manager, I've studied the Society's bylaws and those of other chapters. This has given me a good understanding of the Society objectives structure and the framework within which chapters are to operate.

Experience is a good indicator of qualification to advise chapter leaders about running a chapter, and I believe I am exceptionally qualified in this area. The ballot will show a very summarized list of my STC experience, some of which is listed here.

- Administrative council: 6 years
 - Newsletter editor, manager, or staff: 9 years
 - Manager or co-manager of chapter committees: 20 years (combined)
 - Member of 6 other committees: 11 years (combined)
 - Service at the Society level: 6 years (3 as a competition manager)
 - Region 5 conference work: planning committee (twice); designed the logos (twice); designed the call for presentations, preliminary and final programs, and Web information
 - Attendance at 13 STC conferences
 - Participation in 5 leadership workshops
 - Attendance at over 100 chapter meetings
 - Attendance at over 100 board meetings
- Awards and honors received or helped achieve include:
- Newsletter (10)
 - Public relations
 - Chapter Achievement Awards (7: 6 top awards)
 - Distinguished chapter service award twice
 - Associate fellow

Several other important aspects of the position of director-sponsor haven't been touched on here due to space limitations. For more information, my views on those aspects, candidate information, and the Society elections, visit the Web site: www.stc-phoenix.com/elections.html.



Linda Oestreich, Houston chapter

Linda Oestreich is a senior technical editor for BMC Software in Houston and has been a member of STC since 1979. Currently she's a member of the Houston chapter.

Linda twice served as president of the San Diego chapter, where she was a member 11 years. At the Society level, Linda served as program manager for the 1995 annual conference, assistant to the president for external relations, member of the nominating committee, co-manager of the chapter and regional conferences committee, and manager of the honorary fellows nominating committee. She was named a Fellow of the Society for Technical Communication in 1996, and she has received the distinguished chapter service award.

Linda had the following to say about the responsibilities of the director-sponsor and her hopes for the office:

Director-sponsors should know what's going on in the region, be in touch with chapter presidents, and continually remind chapter leaders about the different resources the Society provides.

The Society has a lot of good processes and services in place, but sometimes chapter leaders don't know about them. For example, the Society offers help with hotel and vendor contract negotiations for major events such as regional conferences, yet many chapters jump into negotiations on their own without asking for help.

I don't think the problem is really with missing services or processes; instead, it's more a matter of chapter leaders not being aware of everything the Society offers. Much of this is because chapter leaders change from year to year and chapters seldom practice succession training.

It's not really possible for the director-sponsor to have contact with each individual member in a region, so it comes back to serving chapter leaders

and listening to what they say about their membership needs. The director-sponsor must answer phone calls and e-mails and meet members during periodic chapter visits.

The director-sponsor role is to take the needs of the membership to the board of directors and champion those needs into solutions. The organizational structure of STC is an inverted pyramid; the 20,000 plus membership is at the top! All STC leaders, no matter at what level, report to the general membership—those members are the true "bosses" of the Society.

I've been in technical communication for a long time and have experienced many economic changes. Chapters can do a number of things to help their members, they can plan programs that support job searches, develop and maintain an active, online job bank, or host a share-the-knowledge seminar about career development and employment issues.

STC is a good place to be in times of economic slowdown. It shouldn't be the first place people think about dropping out of.

A director-sponsor needs to be a good listener, a good communicator, and a good champion for their region. Good director-sponsors never ignore a problem, they work it until it's fixed. They return phone calls, and they make sure the chapter leaders in their region know that they are always available.

Successfully meeting all those qualities takes time and patience and a lot of learning. It's one of the reasons director-sponsors serve their regions for three years. It takes time to make a difference.



Indexers plan editing workshop

Mark your calendar!

The Arizona chapter of the American Society of Indexers presents "Editing the Index" with Maria Coughlin. Join us for this one-day workshop.

After a brief introduction to the theory and practice of indexing (with emphasis on indexing for tech writers), Maria will cover all aspects of editing the index, including tricks and tips for making editing as painless and speedy as possible.

Topics covered will include editing large versus small indexes, editing cumulative indexes, editing to fit page limitations, and reworking another indexer's index. There will be opportunities for hands-on editing of sample indexes provided by the presenter and for participants to bring their own indexes for practical editing guidance.

Attendees are encouraged to come armed with their own thorny editing conundrums to "stump the presenter" or to share with the other attendees for a group solution.

A continental breakfast and a sandwich buffet luncheon will be served.

Maria Coughlin has been indexing for over 20 years. She specializes in medical and scientific indexing, and she has trained over a dozen indexers who successfully work in all topic areas.

Currently she has nine full-time employees at Coughlin Indexing Services, Inc., in Annapolis, MD.

Maria has served on the board of directors of the American Society of Indexers and is currently secretary of the society. She has also been chair of the Washington/Baltimore chapter of ASI, and she regularly presents workshops on indexing, nationally and internationally.

If you are coming from out of town and would like to reserve a sleeping room, contact Nan Badgett ASAP so the hotel will hold your room. The workshop rates are \$69 for a mini-suite; \$79 for a one-bedroom suite.

Meeting details

Date	Saturday, February 9
Time	9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Where	Country Inn & Suites 7411 N. Oracle Road (North on Oracle Road past Ina.)
Cost	\$35 ASI members \$45 nonmembers
Deadline	Reserve by January 30

To RSVP or to get more information, contact Nan Badgett, nbadgett@earthlink.net, 825-2892.

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