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STC Mission Statement:

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

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Southern Arizona Chapter Mission Statement:

To increase public awareness of the technical communication profession and to serve as a resource to STC-SAZ members.

Web site: www.stc-saz.org

Meeting Notice

Informal Networking Dinner

Join us for a relaxing evening of networking and dinner at City Grill.

It's post holiday time, and stress is on the wane. It's a great time to meet with friends and colleagues and discuss whatever we like.

Save the Date: Thursday, Jan. 11

Place: City Grill located at 6464 East Tanque Verde Rd (733-1111)

Time: Registration from 5:30 to 6 p.m. Dinner from 6 p.m.

Menu: Order on site.

Cost: Everyone is responsible for their own dinner.

RSVP: To reserve your spot, send an e-mail message to Pat Markey (pat.markey@comcast.net) **by Wednesday, Jan. 10.**

Walk-ins are welcome.

Topic for Discussion

We would like to hold a half-day workshop on a Saturday morning for \$75 per person. Brenda Huettner and Richard Cook helped conduct a survey on desired topics. The results were split evenly from 16 respondents – there is no real mandate from the survey. No single topic received more than 50 percent of the vote. The top six topics were within 10 percent of each other.

Tied for first place: DITA and KM (six votes each).

Tied for second place: Adobe Acrobat, AuthorIt, Flash, and HTML (five votes each).

We need to find a new topic (or list of topics) before we can move forward with the workshop. Open Source Tools was suggested.





Your dues entitle you to services and resources important to your professional development.

Letter from the President

Stay With STC-SAZ When You Renew

By Carrie Cooper, STC-SAZ President

It's the beginning of a new year, which means it's time to renew your STC membership. **Membership renewals are due Feb. 28, 2007.** Only members who renew by Feb. 28 can vote in the Society elections in March 2007. In addition, members pay a discounted registration rate for the Annual Conference. Only members can access the online STC knowledge base, including *Intercom* magazine and *Technical Communication* journal.

It's quick and easy. You can renew online (<https://www.stc.org/duesrenewal/>) and charge it to your credit card so that you'll pay later. You'll get an e-mail receipt right away for your files. There are several membership levels available that offer chapter membership, so you can stay with the Southern Arizona (STC-SAZ) community.

Note: The Limited level does not include chapter or SIG memberships. If you pick this level, STC-SAZ will lose you as a member.

- **Classic membership** includes printed copies of *Intercom* and *Technical Communication* and either one chapter and one SIG, OR two chapters, OR two SIGs.
- **E-membership** includes one chapter and one SIG, OR two chapters, OR two SIGs.
- **Student membership** includes an unlimited number of SIGs and two chapters (such as STC-SAZ and one student chapter).
- **Retired membership** includes your choice of one chapter and one SIG, OR two chapters, OR two SIGs.

Please pick STC-SAZ as one of your chapters when you renew. We have good things planned for next year, and we want—and need—all our current members to be onboard with us. We'd like to see new chapter members, too. Several key committee positions will be open next year, which can only be filled by a chapter member (*hint*: Treasurer).

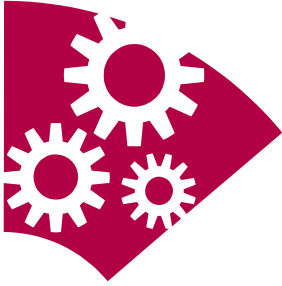
The holiday season can be hectic, but please don't overlook this important detail. I renewed my STC membership; have you?

Web Site of the Month:

I recommend the free Internet radio site and music discovery engine <http://www.pandora.com>. (But listen at home, since streaming media content uses too much bandwidth at work.) Pandora streams music to your computer and makes recommendations based on your preferences. They have recently added the Pandora Community, which lets you find other Pandora listeners who share your musical tastes. The theory is that people who love the same kind of music you do can lead you to discover new artists and songs you'll also enjoy.

For additional articles and tips on maximizing use of the Pandora system, see <http://www.lifehacker.com/software/pandora/>





Feature Article

STC Membership Rewards

by Patricia Markey, Senior member

There are many great reasons to be a member of STC. Here are a couple of them.

The Business of Technical Communication

For this issue of *The Border Line*, I wanted to include an article that is accessible from the STC Web site. But then I realized that you can't read it unless you are a member. However, I can tell you about it, and you can look for yourself.

The STC Web site has a new column on technical communication as it relates to business, under the title of the Business of Technical Communication (BOTC), edited by **Doug Davis** (ddavis@ProEdit.com).

This monthly column focuses on the business side of technical communication. Here's where you can get the latest scoop on industry trends in areas like employment, salaries, job search techniques, and marketable skills. Use this information to become more market savvy and create strategies that will help you make the most of your career as a technical communicator.

Here are abstracts of the first three articles. For more information, visit www.stc.org/pubs/onlinePubs01.asp.

Industrial-strength Technical Communication

In the 1990s, if an employer took one glance at your résumé and started to fall in love with you, it probably had a lot to do with your long list of software tool skills. Nowadays, most employers couldn't care less about tools. It's all about industry experience.

Where Are All the Jobs?

You sit in your favorite comfy chair and open the Sunday newspaper. The economy is steadily improving. Good. Unemployment rates are down. Nice. You've seen all the data. You've read the reports. So, where are all the jobs?

Why Do We Gamble With Our Careers?

At last May's STC conference in Las Vegas, I [Davis] hosted a progression roundtable on employment trends in our industry, during which I stumbled upon an unusual piece of demographic data about my colleagues: Technical communicators don't gamble.

STC 54th Annual Conference

Last month we featured information about the annual conference. Don't forget the early-bird special rate is available until Feb. 28, and members receive the best discounts. A preliminary list of sessions will be available in early February.

For the latest conference news, visit the STC Web site at www.stc.org/54thConf/index.asp.

If you are unfamiliar with Minneapolis or want more information about what is happening there, visit the city's Web site at www.minneapolis.org. You should also visit the Twin Cities community Web site at www.stctc.org.





Society News

WUD Card Sort a Success

Approximately 500 people around the world participated in the card sort exercise on World Usability Day 2006, held Nov. 14, according to Rahel Bailie, co-chair of STC's World Usability Day Committee. Participants represented six of the seven continents; only Antarctica was not represented. Slightly more than half of the card sort participants were from the U.S., with strong participation from the U.K., Canada, the Netherlands, and Israel. Participants ranged from high-school students to retirees, from minimal to heavy weekly Internet users. The only predominant commonality was the type of work—only about two dozen participants did something other than an indoor desk job.

Card sorting is a common analysis technique used to group objects in order to understand how users categorize information. Card sorting is often used by information architects and usability professionals to find latent structure among menu items, Web pages, and the like. Participants logged onto a Web site that was active on Nov. 14, completed a brief survey, and then conducted the card sort, which focused on how different users categorize weather-related terms. Users were given lists of these terms and asked to create names for the categories under which they would group them.

The card sort was conducted in two languages, English and Farsi, and the two sets of data amalgamated. Over the next few weeks, the results will be analyzed for similarities and differences in how participants categorized these weather-related terms. Bailie explained that weather was chosen for the sort because it is universal, and different users apply their personal experiences and connotations with weather-related terms, leading to a varied assortment of data.

Once these data are compiled, World Usability Day volunteers will be publicly sharing the results, so be on the lookout for more information. ■



Editor's Notes

Sharing Information

By Pat Markey, Editor

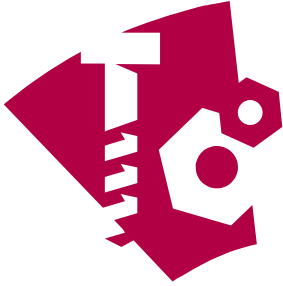
I find it very helpful when colleagues share pertinent Web sites with me. It takes time to find good sources of information, so when someone else has researched a topic, I really appreciate it when they share their insights by forwarding URLs. I may not use them immediately, but I often bookmark them. Please keep us all in mind when you have a site you find particularly useful or intriguing, and forward the URL to me so that we can all share the information. It is a small but much appreciated way to participate in our community. ■



Members Helping Members

Copyright Law

Dave Carlson, SAZ chapter senior member, has forwarded a great URL on copyright law. The site is maintained by Stanford University and provides a lot of various kinds of information. You can even sign up for their newsletter, which is free. For more information, visit fairuse.stanford.edu. ■



This article originally appeared in the STC Northeast Ohio chapter newsletter *Lines and Letters*, Volume 23, Issue 4, December 2006.

Book review

The Elements of Style Illustrated

Reviewed by Jeanette Evans (jeanette.evans@sbcglobal.net)

If you last read *The Elements of Style* years ago and would most likely not read it from cover to cover again, this reissue of the book with illustrations can draw you back to the text—a good thing, since rereading the material is most useful. The advice on writing still applies. The illustrations are zany and welcome, making the reader stop and think more about the material. For example, the book states, "enclose parenthetical expressions between commas."

The accompanying example sentence is "the best way to see a country, unless you are pressed for time, is by foot."

An accompanying illustration shows people on a rock at the top of a mountain. It would take many words to explain the illustration. The idea is that these people could arrive at this mountain top in one way—by foot.

From the us.penguingroup.com Web site, here is some information about the illustrator:

Maira Kalman is acknowledged by the E. B. White estate as the single artist trusted to illustrate the revered *The Elements of Style*. She is the offbeat and wildly talented illustrator of 12 children's books, numerous covers for *The New Yorker* magazine, fabrics for the fashion designers Isaac Mizrahi and Kate Spade, watches and accessories for the Museum of Modern Art, and a mural at the elegant Wavehill estate in Riverdale, among other projects. Her sophisticated and witty images that are yet bright and fanciful have won her a devoted following, especially among young urbanites.

Here is some of the pitch from the Web site:

William Strunk and E. B. White's classic writing manual, *The Elements of Style*, has been enriched to include vibrant, witty, and instantly recognizable images by Maira Kalman in a beautiful illustrated edition. Every English-language writer knows Strunk and White's famous little writing manual, *The Elements of Style*. Many people between the ages of 17 and 70 can recite the book's mantra—make every word tell—and still refer to their tattered grade-school copy when in need of a hint on how to make a turn of phrase clearer, or a reminder on how to enliven prose with the active voice. Considering that millions of copies have been sold to millions of devotees, you might not think to ask what could enhance this (almost) perfect classic. In fact, the addition of illustrations allows readers to experience the book's contents in a completely new way, making the whole learning experience more colorful and clear, as well as adding a whimsical element that complements the subtly humorous tone of the prose.

The Elements of Style Illustrated will come to be known as the definitive, must-have edition. *The Elements of Style Illustrated* brings a fresh immediacy to the well-loved, much-valued, and still on-point work that has become an institution. While giving the classic work a jolt of new energy to appeal to contemporary readers, Kalman's illustrations are themselves timeless, designed to sit alongside the ever-enduring manual for another 50 years and more.

Book information: *The Elements of Style Illustrated*. Authors: William Strunk Jr. and E.B. White. Illustrator: Maira Kalman. 2005. [ISBN 9781594200694. 224 pages. The Penguin Press. \$24.95 USD hardcover.]





Chapter Activity

SAZ Program Schedule

Programs are held on the **second Thursday** of each month in Tucson, except February in Chandler.

New meeting location effective September 2006: El Parador, 2744 East Broadway (south side between Country Club and Tucson Blvd.), www.elparadortucson.com

- **September 14, 2006:** Network and Nibble.
- **October 12, 2006:** Avon Murphy
- **November 9, 2006:** DITA with Tom Escobedo, IBM..
- **December 14, 2006:** Holiday party.
- **January 11, 2007:** Casual networking dinner (no program). City Grill.
- **February 15, 2007:** Susan Burton, STC's Executive Director (U. of Phoenix, Chandler, AZ)
- **March 8, 2007:** Knowledge Management at Intuit and chocolate raffle fundraiser for scholarship
- **April 12, 2007:** Brad Keller will be present to discuss past, present, and future of Help authoring and news about Robohelp, Doc-To-Help, and Microsoft.
- **May 10, 2007:** Annual Meeting: Awards and Recognitions.

The program schedule is subject to change without notice; for up-to-date meeting information, visit www.stc-saz.org.

SAZ Planning 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.

August 22, 2006	December 19 2006	April 24, 2007
September 26, 2006	January 23, 2007	
October 24, 2006	February 27, 2007	
November 28, (e-mail)	March 27, 2007	

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.

Committee Openings

Publicity and Public Relations

This is a fun, very visible job that is critical for the communication efforts of our chapter. Two to four people would make an ideal team. For more information, contact Brenda Huettner at bphuettner@aol.com.

Education Outreach

This group would be our liaison with the Tucson academic communities, both for higher education and secondary schools.

Scholarship Committee

This person solicits and processes applications for our annual scholarship award from the college communities in Tucson.





Networking

STC Phoenix Meeting

How to be the Hero in Your Own Life

With Rebecca Joy

Rebecca is a veteran firefighter with the Phoenix Fire Department. As a first responder, she recognizes the need for a higher level of awareness and mindfulness in our daily lives. With the goal of creating greater awareness, she is the founder and director of the Universal Awareness Movement.

Her intention is to encourage and inspire the world to be more consciously aware of their thoughts, feelings, words, actions, and surroundings. This can be achieved if every person would simply take a breath before making a choice or decision, and ask themselves, "What is it I need to know?" This practical and useful message of awareness can be used by anyone, in any situation, at anytime in your life.

Rebecca Joy was in the first group of women hired by the Phoenix Fire Department. She has been with the department for more than 23 years and still enjoys going to work every third day. In 1990, she was promoted to the position of engineer. At 5 feet 6 inches, Rebecca loves driving her crew in their 20-ton fire truck as they routinely respond to fires and emergencies. She is truly grateful for the unique opportunity she has had to serve her community in her role as a firefighter. Years of classes in energy healing have enhanced both her personal growth and her skills in patient care. She enjoys continuing her studies in the art of acting and voice-overs. Rebecca makes her home in Tempe with her two wonderful young men, Damien, 16, and Jesse, 15.

Please remember to bring your résumé, and be certain to introduce yourself if you are looking for a job.

For more information, visit the Phoenix Web site, www.stc-phoenix.com.



Educational Opportunities

STC Remote Seminars

With all seminars, the cost is per site, not per person. Note that registration closes 24 hours before the seminar. For more information, visit the STC Web site, www.stc.org/seminars.asp.

The Xfactor-From HTML to XHTML

HTML will be with us for years, but still, it's officially dead, replaced by XHTML. Future authoring tools will hide XHTML's details from us, the way today's tools largely hide the details of HTML. But, today, XHTML is still new enough that it's useful to understand why it appeared and how it works at the code level. This presentation introduces XHTML at both the concept and code levels. XHTML is based on XML, so the presentation first reviews XML's concepts and codes. It then moves on to the specifics of XHTML—why it appeared and whether you need it (and whether you have a choice), how it differs from HTML and XML, what its codes look like, how to convert files from other formats to XHTML, and what tools you can use to do so.

Neil Perlin has 28 years' experience in technical communication, with 22 in training, consulting, and development for various types of online formats and tools including WinHelp, HTML Help, CE Help, JavaHelp, RoboHelp, ForeHelp, Flare, and some now largely forgotten. Neil is a columnist and frequent speaker for STC and other

professional groups, a member of the Boston chapter STC, the creator and manager of the Beyond the Bleeding Edge stem at STC's annual conference, and an STC associate fellow.

Neil is a Madcap certified instructor for Flare, and an Adobe certified instructor for RoboHelp and Captivate. He provides training, consulting, and development for online help and documentation, Flare, RoboHelp, Captivate, XML, and single-sourcing through Hyper/Word Services of Tewksbury, Mass. He can be reached at nperlin@concentric.net or via www.hyperword.com.

- **Presenter:** Neil Perlin
- **Date:** Wednesday, Jan. 17 | 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Mountain Standard Time
- **Seminar Level:** Beginner/Intermediate

ANSI Z535.6: A New Standard for Safety Information in Product-Accompanying Literature

A new national standard for how to present safety messages in owners' manuals, ANSI Z535.6, "Product Safety Information in Product Manuals, Instructions, and Other Collateral Materials," has been recently published. It addresses the design and placement of product safety messages (often referred to as warnings) in product-accompanying documents such as owners' manuals, instructions, users' guides, maintenance or service manuals, assembly instructions, and safety manuals. Among other things, the standard deals with the applicability of elements of other ANSI Z535-series standards to product safety information in these "collateral materials."

The standard classifies safety messages based on their relationship to other information in the document and defines four types of safety messages: supplemental directives, grouped safety messages, section safety messages, and embedded safety messages. For each of these safety messages, graphical elements used in other Z535-series standards, such as signal words (that is, "DANGER," "WARNING," "CAUTION," "NOTICE"), the safety alert symbol, and safety colors, are addressed in Z535.6.

The purpose of this presentation is to provide awareness of ANSI Z535.6 to those within STC who develop and/or oversee the development of manuals that contain safety information.

Steven Hall is a senior consultant and director of hazard communication consultations at Applied Safety and Ergonomics. He serves as vice-chair for the ANSI Z535.6 Subcommittee, which directed and oversaw the development of the new standard. He holds a bachelor's degree in engineering physics and a master's degree in industrial and operations engineering. He is also a certified product safety manager.

Elaine Wisniewski is a managing consultant in the human factors and product safety group at Applied Safety and Ergonomics. She participates in research, development, and evaluation of safety communication such as warnings, instructions, symbols and graphics, owner's manuals, and other safety-related publications. She received a master's degree in industrial and operations engineering and is currently pursuing a master's degree in technical communication.

- **Presenter:** Steven Hall and Elaine Wisniewski
- **Date:** Wednesday, Jan. 31 | 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Mountain Standard Time
- **Seminar Level:** Intermediate/Advanced



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Publication Policies

We welcome contributions, book and product reviews, letters, and articles that are relevant to the field of technical communication. **Content is due the fourth Tuesday of every month.** Your text may be edited to conform to style guidelines and space restrictions of the newsletter.

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Past Presidents of the Southern Arizona Chapter

1998-1999 – Dirk Arnold

1999-2000 – Debra Parker (Crawford)

2000-2001 – Barbara Fraps

2001-2002 – Brenda Huettner

2002-2003 – Helen Marty

2003-2004 – Patricia Markey

2004-2006 – Kitty Aughey