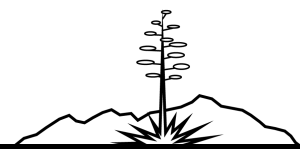


THE BORDER LINE



News from the Society for Technical Communication, Southern Arizona Chapter
October 2000, Volume 5, Number 2

Join now for free months of membership

Interested in joining the Southern Arizona chapter? Now is a great time to start.

New members who join during October, November, or December are paid in full through 2001. (You net a couple of free months!)

To join, contact Judy McCabe at 806-3276 (days), 546-9004 (evenings), or mccabe@mmsi.com.

Membership news

Welcome! The Southern Arizona chapter welcomes new member **Karyn Huggett**.

October meeting details

Thursday, October 26

5:30 p.m. Registration and networking

6:00 p.m. Fajita buffet

7:00 p.m. Program

Viscount Suites Hotel

4855 E. Broadway Boulevard

\$16 for members

\$18 for nonmembers

\$5 program only

**Telephone your registration to
749-0747**

or e-mail bphuettnr@aol.com

**Reserve by 5 p.m.
Monday, Oct. 23**

**No shows will be billed, and
walk-ins are always welcome!**

**For more information
749-0747**

Coming in October

Jazzing up your Web site with free resources

Featuring John Hedtke

Having a Web site is almost a requirement for every professional these days.

Unfortunately, most people have Web sites that are pretty pedestrian or, worse, suffer from too many different themes.

The October meeting of the Southern Arizona chapter of the Society for Technical Communication will show you dozens of free resources that will help you create a more dazzling Web site that will sell the product (you!) much more effectively. You'll see places to find unusual graphics, design tips, and web design tools. You'll also see examples of bad Web sites as cautionary tales.

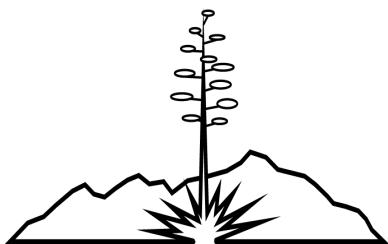
Our speaker, John Hedtke, is the award-winning author of 21 books. He has over 20 years in the software business, 17 years writing, and seven years in technical publications management. John has developed and written documentation and books for many leading software products, and has received 19 regional and international writing awards to date.

His most recent books are *The RoboHELP 2000 Bible* (book and CD; with Elisabeth Knottingham), *MP3 for Musicians* (book and CD; with Sandy Bradley), and *Visio 2000: The Official Guide* (with Elisabeth Knottingham). John regularly contributes articles to magazines such as *Publish!* and *Accounting Technology*. A complete list of John's books, articles, projects, and awards can be found online through his Web site, www.hedtke.com.

John does numerous radio interviews and frequently travels to do lectures and guest appearances at conferences and seminars. John is past president of the Puget Sound chapter of the STC.

When not otherwise occupied writing books and consulting, he writes magazine articles, plays the banjo, and sleeps late as much as possible. John lives in Seattle.

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 are welcome. Send mail to stb@rightfax.com, or phone 320-7029. Include your name and telephone number.

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.

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 Friday of each month.

Electronic version 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 stb@rightfax.com.

Sharpening the blade

Upcoming events for continuing education

The Southern Arizona chapter provides the following announcements as a service to members. The chapter doesn't endorse these offerings.

Workshop *Developing a Single-Sourcing Strategy*

Location Loveland CO

Date Wednesday-Thursday November 8-9

Host Company Hach Company

Fee \$650 (normally \$1,000)

Registration Call or e-mail the workshop coordinator, Molly Sausaman, at 303-234-0123 or molly.sausaman@comtech-serv.com, or <http://www.usabledesign.com>.

This workshop will be repeated in Irvine, California, Wednesday-Thursday, November 15-16. Dr. JoAnn Hackos instructs.

Conference *2000 FrameUsers Conference: How Did You Do That?*

The emphasis of the conference is on using Adobe FrameMaker effectively on a day-to-day basis.

Location San Diego CA

Date Wednesday-Friday, Nov. 1-3

Preconference workshops held Monday-Tuesday, Oct. 30-31.

Registration <http://www.FrameUsers.com>

Chapter administrative council

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Treasurer	Helen Marty	ham@sunquest.com
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Albuquerque balloon fest accents regional conference

The New Mexico Kachina chapter has announced its agenda for this fall's region 5 conference, "Navigating the New Century," in Albuquerque.

The conference takes place during Albuquerque's annual international balloon fiesta, the largest ballooning event in the world. A special trip to view the mass ascension of the hot air balloons is available for conference attendees.

The chapter has lined up experts ranging from technical communicators to scientists who will discuss advances in technical communication and related fields.

Topics of the conference include future subjects in science and engineering, workshops on career development, challenges for 21st century communicators, and modeling information in electronic space.

Keynote speaker Paula Berger of SOLUTIONS will target what's hot and what's not in technical communication today and will predict the ins and outs of the future.

Suzanna Laurent, STC region 5 director-sponsor, will discuss how to create positive team dynamics.

Laurent will also conduct a seminar, "The Leadership Challenge," that will address topics on developing commitment and motivation, delegating for results, leading a successful STC chapter, and taking advantage of the many opportunities STC offers. Laurent was named one of the top 10 business women in the nation by the American Business Women's Association in 1997.

Chuck Campbell, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, will explain how to write so people can understand what you write better, faster, and more accurately. Scott Sanders, University of New Mexico, will show how Web design can draw on the lessons of landscape design for 3D experiences. Steven Howe, Los Alamos National Laboratory, will talk about how we can use antimatter to fuel trips across the cosmos.

The conference will take place Friday and Saturday, Oct. 13-14. The cost is \$150 for members, \$200 for nonmembers, and \$90 for students who registered by September 1. After September 1, the cost increased by \$50 for members and nonmembers.

The conference will take place at the Sheraton Old Town, where the Kachina chapter has reserved a block of rooms. Rates are \$125 for a single or double occupancy room. Reservations can be made by calling 1-800-237-2133 and mentioning the conference to receive the special rate. Because the conference takes place during the balloon fiesta, attendees are encouraged to make reservations early.

For more information on registering for the conference, contact Teri Wilkins at 505-881-9228, ext. 103, by e-mail twilkins@oees.com, or visit the conference Web site at <http://www.unm.edu/~web290/stcrc5.html>.

The New Mexico Kachina chapter has 100 members and has been offering educational programs in technical communication for its members and the community since 1983.



Saddle up and move 'em out!

Competitions roundup is under way

By Aiessa Moyna, Phoenix chapter
Competition publicity co-manager

The deadline for entries is long gone, and the judges are preparing to inspect the prime and choice entries submitted in the STC Phoenix 2000 Technical Publications, Art, and Online Competitions.

If you've entered your work in the competitions, then you may be interested to know how the judging process works.

Our judges play a critical role in the success of the competitions, so we start by selecting the most qualified professionals around. All judges must apply or must have judged an STC Phoenix competition in the past.

Each one is a seasoned communicator with a discriminating eye and years of experience evaluating the work of others. Still, we require all judges to attend a half-day training session, to ensure consistency in the judging process for each of the competitions.

The judges will spend most of this month scrutinizing each entry assigned to them. They'll evaluate how well the piece achieves the stated purpose, the appropriateness of the media used to convey the message, and other criteria established by the Society for Technical Communication. (For details, see the "Competitions" page on the STC Web site at www.stc-va.org.) After evaluating the pieces individually, they'll meet with their fellow judges for a daylong consensus judging session.

During the consensus judging, the judges may brand each entry with one of three ratings. They are, in descending order:

- Distinguished Technical Communication
- Excellence
- Merit

You'll learn the results before the end of the year. If your entry has been branded Distinguished Technical Communication, then it will be entered automatically in the appropriate STC international competition early in 2001.

Finally, on February 13, the STC Phoenix chapter will host an awards banquet to honor the winners, announce the Best of Show Award, and publicly identify the entries that will go on to the international competitions.

For more information about this year's Technical Publications, Art, and Online Competitions, go to our dedicated Web site at www.stc-phoenix.com/PAO-2000.htm. You also may contact competition co-managers Maura Betler (Maura_Betler@g1.com or 480-948-3544) or Carl Gotlieb (gotliebc@agcs.com or 602-789-9248).

Volunteers still needed for 2000 competitions

Are you interested in helping with this year's competitions, but unable to make a long-term commitment?

Then consider volunteering for just one day! Volunteers still are needed to help coordinate the consensus judging session on November 4. Can you spend a few hours setting up a breakfast or lunch buffet, preparing the judging rooms, or helping to put everything back in order at the end of the day? Then this is the volunteer job for you!

Contact Maura Betler (Maura_Betler@g1.com or 480-948-3544) or Carl Gotlieb (gotliebc@agcs.com or 602-789-9248) for details.





Leaders light the way

By J. Suzanna Laurent, region 5 director-sponsor
suzanna.laurent@mciworld.com

August message

I have decided to call my monthly column "Leaders Light the Way" because I know how often great leaders are developed through their participation in STC chapters. You are the "leaders who light the way" — those in roles such as mentors, officers, and committee or project managers. You make a tremendous difference to the Society and its members, and I enthusiastically thank you for these contributions to STC!

The most successful leaders are the ones who recognize the creative potential of the people on their teams and use that potential wisely. The reward for good leaders is personal and professional growth, self-satisfaction, and a chance to make a difference in the technical communication field.

As a Society-level leader, I know the same thing about STC chapters that Baskin-Robbins knows about ice cream — there are many different flavors. None of STC's chapters are just plain vanilla. The chapters don't operate exactly the same, have the same goals, or need the same things from us.

STC chapters are as varied as the people who make up their membership, and this is true of their resources as well. You probably know what is available within your chapter, but good leaders must use all of their resources, so I want to review a few that are available to you from the Society.

The number one benefit that members say they receive from their STC membership is access to the chapter and the Society web sites. The Society web site is at www.stc-va.org, and the amount of information stored on this award-winning site is awesome. The web site also provides guidelines for competitions, grant and loan programs, recognition programs, and so much more. Take time now to review this web site, because it is a

valuable resource that should answer many questions about STC.

The **Chapter Handbook** on the web site provides information about chapter finances, programs, public relations, newsletters, and employment. It also gives advice on leading a volunteer board, finding and retaining members, and nurturing volunteers.

The **STC Administrative Directory** identifies members in key positions within the Society. It is published three times a year and mailed to all those listed in the directory, which includes the board of directors, assistants to the president, committee managers, editors of Technical Communication, Intercom, and Tieline, faculty advisors, and the chapter presidents, newsletter editors, employment managers, and membership managers.

Tieline is the monthly publication mailed to STC leaders that has articles and hints for running successful chapters. You can even search the Web site for past articles in this and the Society's other award-winning publications.

To gather ideas for activities, refer to the new **Chapter Achievement Award** guidelines on the web site; they reveal the basic requirements for successful chapters.

Leadership **workshops** are always available at our annual and region 5 conferences. Many chapters even host their own leadership workshops.

Don't forget that I am also a resource. My job as **Director-Sponsor** is to serve as a liaison between the members and the board of directors. When you have a concern that cannot be solved with information from any of these resources, please contact me at suzanna.laurent@mciworld.com.

Resolve now to become a better leader and take advantage of STC and the opportunities it offers to do just that!



STC board reports decisions made at fall meeting

By J. Suzanna Laurent, region 5 director-sponsor

The STC board of directors met in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, September 14-17. Major issues handled included adopting an official policy about chapter formation and members outside of the U.S., branding and STC's corporate identity, the hosting of Web sites for chapters, and approving merit grants and chapter loans.

Committee and program updates

- The board authorized the Society office to conduct a membership drive using a professional marketing company.
- STC will become an affiliate member of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C).
- Three new chapters were formed: San Luis Obispo chapter, region 8; Texas A&M Student chapter, region 5; and the Netherlands chapter, region 4.
- The Instructional Design & Learning SIG was approved with an initial budget of \$1,900.
- The 2006 annual conference will be in Denver, CO.
- The 2007 annual conference will be in Minneapolis, MN.
- Freya Winsberg, Phoenix chapter, was appointed program manager for a future annual conference.
- Registration fee for the next annual conference is \$420; the speaker's fee remains \$350.

These new committee managers were appointed:

- Edward Carbrey, Boston chapter, Jay R. Gould Award Committee.
- Dale Erickson, Lone Star chapter, New Media Delivery Systems Committee.
- Jon Baker, Boston chapter, New Media Publications Committee.
- Jack Molisani, Los Angeles chapter, Chapter and Regional Conferences Committee.
- Amy Burdan, Hoosier chapter, Scientific Communication SIG.

- Roy Hartshorn, Toronto chapter, Canadian Curricula in Professional Development Committee.

Merit grants approved

- \$3,000 to the Central New York chapter to implement a comprehensive revitalization/growth plan.
- \$3,000 to the Mid-South chapter to build its scholarship fund.
- \$3,000 to the Atlanta chapter to build its scholarship fund.
- \$1,200 to the Hoosier chapter to develop the Insight Award to recognize Indiana corporations and organizations that innovatively use the skills and capabilities of their technical communicators.
- \$3,000 to the Alberta chapter to construct a portable display to be used at the all-Canada Smart 2000 Conference and Exposition in November 2000, and at regional professional, educational, and community events.
- \$2,070 to the Alaska chapter to construct a portable display for use at regional professional, educational, and community events across Alaska.
- \$1,500 to the East Bay chapter to further develop its Technical Literacy Program.

Loans approved

- Multichapter loan of \$6,000 to the Mid-Valley and Willamette Valley chapters to host the region 7 conference in Portland, Oregon, in October 2001.
- Chapter loan of \$3,000 to the Los Angeles chapter to seed a multichapter, self-sustaining technical publications, online communication, and art competition in Southern California.

Budget

STC follows a system of zero-based budgeting. It cannot operate or begin the fiscal year at a deficit. The board approved a budget for FY 2001 of income = \$4,725,250; expenses = \$4,711,849; and a net surplus of \$13,401.

Branding and corporate identity

The board approved a new logo and stationery program for the Society. Chapter presidents will receive specific, detailed corporate identity information, such as how to use the new logo, etc., before the end of the year.



Past president Mary Wise announced the new STC mission statement, *Designing the Future of Technical Communication*, at this year's annual conference. Another external brand tool is the organization's "story," which is a brief explanation of what the organization stands for, who its members are, and how it views its future. The STC board approved the STC story — our consistent "face" that we present to the rest of the world. While it is not meant to replace the more extensive literature we provide to prospective members and others, this story is the "elevator message" we can use to briefly explain who and what we are. Judy Glick-Smith, STC's second vice president, will present a 90-minute session on the branding process, brand tools, and how they can be used by chapters at the region 5 conference leadership workshop in Albuquerque, NM, October 13-15.

The STC story

Through information sharing and industry leadership, STC helps professionals design effective communication for a technical world. Because technology touches everyone, STC promotes public welfare by encouraging the development of better-educated professionals whose jobs are to make complicated information usable by many.

The organization's growth has mirrored our growing dependence on technology. Initially, STC was primarily made up of engineers who, among other activities, wrote instructions and descriptions of how electrical and mechanical products worked. A profound change took place as the pervasiveness of technology and the need to understand it became an integral part of our everyday lives. With the emergence of the Internet and online communication, our members now focus on supporting all aspects of the rapidly evolving world of technology.

The organization began because those working in the field recognized themselves as professionals with unique training and career issues. Today, STC is nearly 50 years old, with 150 chapters and 25,000 members worldwide. It is the largest organization for technical communicators. STC offers industry leadership

and the education, networking, and information required in a world where change is "the way it is."

Web site hosting for chapters

For several years, the board has been dealing with a number of difficult issues related to decentralized versus centralized hosting of chapter Web sites. Recent problems and service difficulties as STC.org's bandwidth needs have exceeded what our current ISP can provide makes this issue urgent as well as extremely important.

Over the next few months, committees in the communications area will be developing and implementing a transition plan that will enable chapters to select their own ISPs and maintain their own Web sites in a decentralized system. Such a system means that, within some general guidelines (we do have to present a fairly consistent "face" to the world; see Branding above), chapters will have greater creative latitude and capabilities to develop and change their Web sites.

ISP and other costs associated with Web sites have decreased considerably over the years, so most chapters will be able to maintain their sites with their chapter funds. Small and new chapters, which may not have enough funds, are eligible for grants for Web site startup under the existing Merit Grant program. Contact your Director-Sponsor for more details. Again, moving chapter Web sites from the volunteer-run STC.org site to ISPs selected by individual chapters will occur according to a careful transition plan, and chapter presidents will be contacted.

Many of the issues mentioned in this article are far-reaching and important, but the discussions here are necessarily brief. Please contact me if you have any questions.



Clip 'N Save

Southern Arizona STC Tentative 2000-2001 Events

October 26	Improving Your Web Site with Free Resources
November 30	Developing Training Materials
December 19	Holiday Party and Pubs Competition Winners
January 25	Whine and Cheese IV, Part II
February 17	Workshop: Getting the Most from Adobe Acrobat Files
February 27	Organizing and Managing a Writing Project
March 29	Effective Visual Communication
April 24	Using an Intranet Site to Manage a Development Project
May 17	What Employers Look For, and How to Present Your Skills and Experience

For up-to-date meeting information, go to <http://www.stc.org/region5/saz/default.htm>