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# TECH comments

The newsletter for the Southeastern Michigan Chapter of the Society for Technical Communications.

## President's Message

I hope you all enjoyed the summer months and took full advantage of the great weather to relax, unwind, and get away before the demands of work, family, and school lurch back into full swing. I am excited to be serving as chapter president this year and to have the opportunity to work with the great group of experienced and creative people on the chapter board.

Programs for the 2001-2002 chapter year will kick off with our annual networking meeting to be held September 19 at the Novi Hilton. I encourage you all to come! While always a great opportunity to learn more about our profession and meet our peers, the networking meeting is also an excellent opportunity to begin building those professional relationships that could lead to future job opportunities.

On November 3, our chapter will host the Region 4 Conference: *Exploring Technical Communication and the User Experience*. The conference will be a one-day event held at Eastern Michigan University's Eagle Creek conference center in Ypsilanti. We will distribute more information about the conference to you via the chapter web site and flyers as soon as it is available.

We will continue to hold chapter program meetings at various locations throughout the area so that everyone will have a chance to attend at least one program meeting during the year. We are a geographically dispersed chapter and, while it is almost impossible to hold programs in locations convenient to all members, this compromise seems to work. We are encouraged and excited when we see a variety of new and different faces attending the programs at the different locations.

While I feel we've been very successful at organizing and coordinating programs, I believe there are other areas where we need to "get back to basics," as I'd like to say. This year, I would like to focus on getting back to providing you, our members, with some of the reliable, quality sources of news and information that you've come to expect from the chapter: a timely, informative, and interesting newsletter; and a dynamic, functional, and easy-to-use web site.

To help us achieve this goal, we established a Communications Committee to oversee the dissemination of information through the newsletter, web site, and publicity channels. In addition, we are developing and distributing a survey this year to ask for your input on what you'd like to see the chapter do to better support your professional development. Internally, we'll be reviewing our chapter bylaws and refining chapter job descriptions to better guide us in this endeavor.

I welcome and encourage each of you to voice your opinions about your chapter-and to get involved! Tell us what we're doing well and what we're doing not so well-and don't forget to offer your suggestions for how we might improve it.

I'm looking forward to an exciting and busy year and to meeting each of you at our chapter program meetings. And if you're new to the chapter or the program meetings, don't hesitate to introduce yourself to me or any of our board members.

See you on the 19th!

*Jennifer Regal*

Chapter President, STC/SM

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## Inside

- STC/SM Transition Board Meeting..... 2
- Recognition of Services..... 3
- Publication and Reprint Policies ..... 3
- Something to Say?..... 4
- Education Opportunities ..... 5
- Employment Opportunities ..... 5
- Practicing Safe 'Net ..... 6
- 2001-2002 Networking Meeting ..... 7

# STC/SM Transition Board Meeting

Minutes from 7/31/01

## Administrative Council

### President

Jennifer Regal  
president@stc-sm.org  
(734) 769-5000 x628

### Vice President & Region 4 Conference

#### Chair

Catherine Titta  
vicepresident@stc-sm.org  
(734) 996-9006

### Treasurer

Sally Paul  
treasurer@stc-sm.org  
(734) 426-5680 x3464

### Secretary

Deb Stacy  
secretary@stc-sm.org  
(734) 426-5680 x3102

### Immediate Past President & Nominations

#### Chair

Paul Sisler  
pastpresident@stc-sm.org  
(734) 996-9006

## Committee Managers

### Employment Referral Service/Listserv

Elizabeth Donaghue  
Colviedonaghuec@hotmail.com  
ers@stc-sm.org  
(248) 448-7523

### Membership

Arlene Dietz  
d.dynamics@attglobalnet.com  
membership@stc-sm.org  
(734) 327-9700

### Professional Liaison

Toni Pollock  
tonipollock@jawood.com  
profliaison@stc-sm.org

### Programs

Mary Hayes  
mary.hayes@genomicsolutions.com  
programs@stc-sm.org  
(734) 975-4800 x231

### Nominations

Ginny Collins-Llope

## Communications Committee

### Newsletter & Nominations, Communica-

#### tions Chair

Michael Dailey  
newsletter@stc-sm.org  
(734) 930-7893

### Web Master

Barb Lauter  
webdeveloper@stc-sm.org  
(313) 591-7881

### Publicity

Open  
publicity@stc-sm.org

## Region 4 Leadership

### Region 4 Director Sponsor

Mike Bates  
mpbates@software.rockwell.com  
(440) 646-7548

## Administration

- Board meetings are scheduled for 6:30 PM on the first Monday of each month. (The location will be announced.)
- The September board meeting is scheduled for the 10<sup>th</sup> per the holiday.
- Sally Paul (Treasurer) distributed the annual financial report.
- Sally will soon purchase the laptop for which funds were allocated last year.

## Projects / Goals for next year

### Region 4 Conference

- We are hosting the conference at the Ypsilanti Marriott at Eagle Crest on November 3 from 9 AM to 4 PM.
- Catherine Titta is the Conference Chair.
- DotCom Guy is the keynote speaker.
- The Call for Papers was extended from July 30 to August 6.
- Toni Pollock (Professional Liaison) strongly suggested that we approach businesses regarding booths instead of asking companies to sponsor rooms, as was previously discussed.
- The board discussed compiling a list of web sites on which we want to advertise the conference. Send all suggestions to Michael Dailey.

### Communication Committee

Our chapter is forming a Communications Committee, the responsibilities of which will include the newsletter, publicity, and the web site.

### Programs

- Mary Hayes (Programs Committee Manager) and her committee will create a feedback form for the programs.
- The Programs Committee will look into setting up the web site so members can register and pay for programs online.

### Job Descriptions

- Jennifer Regal (President) provided the board members with descriptions of chapter positions from a couple of STC publications so the board members can more clearly define their roles.
- Jennifer provided all board members with a copy of the chapter Bylaws. The board plans to work on updating the Bylaws this year.

### Survey

Last year, the board discussed conducting a survey of chapter members which would provide information on what members would like to see changed, added, improved in STC. It turns out that nationals conducts a survey from which our chapter should be able to pull information.

### Membership

The New Member Packet was not discussed.

### Employee Referral Service/Listserv

Elizabeth Donaghue-Colvin (ERS/Listserv Manager) mentioned that there is a way to view posts from the last (approximately) two months. To do so, go to <http://www.stc-sm.org>, click the **listserv** button, click the link for the listserv web site (<http://lists.stc.org/cgi-bin/lyris.pl?enter=stcsemc-l>), enter your e-mail address and password, and click the Read Message button.

## Recognition of Services

We would like to recognize Jim Lorraine and **Alpha Services** for their contributions to this edition of *TECH Comments*. Jim and his team provided the printing for this edition with their compliments and we appreciate their support.

We would also like to recognize **Manhattan Mailers** for their work with distributing this edition.

## Publication and Reprint Policies

TECH comments is published monthly September through June for members and friends of the Southeastern Michigan Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication. We welcome feature articles: letters to the editor; and information about meetings, courses, and workshops. We accept manuscripts in both hardcopy and electronic format with MS Word or ASCII text. Submissions will be edited as necessary.

Reprints from *TECH comments* are permitted if credit is given and a copy is sent to the managing editor.

Send submissions to:

Managing Editor  
STC/SM  
P.O. Box 1289  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106

or E-mail to: [newsletter@stc-sm.org](mailto:newsletter@stc-sm.org)

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## Something to Say?

Do you have something to say that will benefit our membership? If so, send it in and we will include it in *TECH comments*. This newsletter is produced for the benefit of our membership, and that means you!

We welcome comments and criticism, as long as they are constructive in nature. We also welcome articles, thoughts, and recommendations by our members. Here are a few of the things we would like to include in the monthly newsletter:

- Articles discussing new theories regarding technical communication and the application of those theories in real-life scenarios.
- Articles about tips and techniques for producing documentation, using software, and printing.
- Reviews of books related to technical communication, graphic design, or other topics that might interest our membership.
- News, meetings dates, and other information other organizations to which our members belong that might benefit the membership as a whole,
- Updates from SIGs to which our members belong.
- Updates on new books and articles published by members.
- New educational programs available.

As you can see, there are many kinds of information we can pass onto each other. Don't be bashful!

### Important Note

All submissions to *TECH comments* must arrive by the **15th** of the month if you want them included in the next issue. Items received after that deadline may be held back and published in a future edition.

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## Get Involved!

There are many ways to get involved in the chapter. You can join a committee, pen an article, work on the Web site, or take on a specific task in for a program or conference. Here are a few of ideas:

- Greet members at the beginning of programs
- Tend to publicity announcements for program meetings and special events.
- Work with the Professional Liaison to build connections with other professional organizations.
- Organize chapter archives
- Help track list server announcements and ERS notices

The networking meeting in September is an excellent time and place to meet our chapter leaders and get involved. Take some time during the meeting to tell us how you want to help with chapter business!

## Education Opportunities

### Lawrence Technological University

Beginning this fall, Lawrence Technological University's College of Arts and Sciences will offer a new Master of Science degree in technical communication designed to prepare students for rewarding careers in this burgeoning field.

Requirements for the new program can be completed in two years, and consist of 30 credit hours, including 12 hours of electives that allow for specialized focus. Course work for the new degree concentrates on professional development in publications management, multimedia and web design, and organizational communication - skills highly in demand by employers.

With the addition of the new master's degree, Lawrence Tech offers a trilogy of technical communication programs that also include a Certificate of Technical Communication and a Bachelor of Science in Technical Communication.

### Other Programs available

Other schools offering degrees or certificates related to technical communications, graphic design, journalism include:

- Eastern Michigan University
- Washtenaw Community College
- Wayne State University
- Bowling Green University

If you know of other programs that would be of interest to our members, send the information to *TECH comments* and we will include it in the next edition.

## Employment Opportunities

### ProEdit: Contract Technical Writer, Auburn Hills, MI Job # BH1066

ProEdit is seeking a Technical Writer for a full-time, on site, 2 to 4 month, contract position in Auburn Hills, MI. The writer will be responsible for documenting a software package that measures automotive equipment. The writer will also be responsible for creating charts and graphics for the documentation. This is an excellent opportunity to work with a leader in the automotive industry.

Qualifications for this position include:

- A minimum of 1 year of experience documenting software is required.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office and Visio is required.
- Proficiency with building PowerPoint presentations is preferred, but not necessary.

### ProEdit Contract Technical Writer Ann Arbor, MI Job # GI60

ProEdit is seeking a Technical Writer for an on site, 12 month, contract position in Ann Arbor, MI. This writer will be responsible for writing, editing, and reformatting a variety of documentation for training procedures and other business communications. This writer will also create attractive PowerPoint presentations for use with the documentation. This is an excellent opportunity to work for a national IT consulting firm.

Qualifications for this position include:

- A minimum of 1 year of technical writing and editing experience is required, with additional experience creating charts, graphs, and formal presentations.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint) is required. Proficiency with Visio is a plus.

**If you are interested in applying Job # BH1066 or Job # GI60**, please e-mail your resume along with the job number, your hourly rate, and availability date to [resumes@proedit.com](mailto:resumes@proedit.com). If you would like to discuss this position further, please call a Technical Recruiter at 1-888-PROEDIT.

For more information on ProEdit and additional job postings, see our web site at <http://www.proedit.com>.

### Interactive Business Systems Position: Instructional Designer/Technical Writer Type: Full-time, Permanent Job Location: Walled Lake, Michigan

Skills required: Minimum 3 years experience with instructional design and computer-based training products/systems (e-learning). Experience with HR systems and content development required. Hands-on experience with ADDIE MODEL (instructional design tool)

Job Description: Assisting with the design and documentation of custom learning courses utilizing ADDIE MODEL and other technology. Responsibility also includes doing content development and business analysis for these products. Creation, development and implementation of document templates for project-related and production-related work. Work closely with the CUO, CTO, project teams and production teams for product documentation and tracking. Develop and manage a system of document templates and archives.

Salary: \$50K - \$60K US

Contact: Dave Dininio Interactive Business Systems Detroit, Michigan (416) 203-7466 ext. 3017 E-mail: [ddininio@ibs.com](mailto:ddininio@ibs.com) URL: [www.ibs.com](http://www.ibs.com)

## Practicing Safe 'Net

Toward the end of 1999, many of us were caught up in the hysteria surrounding the dreaded Y2K bug. Fortunately, this chaos threatened never materialized. Unfortunately, there are some very real, very dangerous viruses out there that can cause serious damage to our computers and files.

About a year ago, I was infected by one of the more insidious viruses currently in circulation. I was running the appropriate software and had taken every precaution except changing the Share setting for my hard drive to read-only. One morning, I turned on my computer and watched as the virus deleted the contents of every file with an extension of DOC, PPT, or XLS. I was fortunate in that most of my work was stored in files unaffected by this particular virus. Some of my co-workers lost hundreds of files. Needless to say, I became much more aware of viruses and their dangers as a result of that incident.

We all share files and E-mail every day. How can we continue our business without risking infection? The answer is simple, use protection! We have a responsibility to our clients and our peers to protect ourselves and them from viruses. Infecting a client can seriously damage your relationship and your reputation.

There are several good anti-virus programs available for a reasonable price. If you don't have a program of this kind installed, I strongly urge you to evaluate them and purchase one. These programs typically provide regular upgrades that protect you from new viruses as soon as they are discovered. These programs are not 100% effective. New viruses are created every day so there is no way to protect yourself completely other than to abstain from sharing any files or E-mail. Still, these programs go a long way toward preventing computer and file damage.

We can also use some basic common sense. Don't open a file or run an executable received from someone you don't know. You wouldn't open the door at night for a complete stranger would you? Well, that applies to E-mail attachments and data files also. If you are concerned about a file, check it out before you open it. And finally, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Here is a list of several organizations that track viruses and their web addresses. A few of them also track virus hoaxes.

- \* Computer Incident Advisory Capability (<http://ciac.llnl.gov/>)
- \* Symantec (<http://www.symantec.com/avcenter/>)
- \* NIST Virus Information Page (<http://csrc.nist.gov/virus/>)
- \* McAfee Virus Pages (<http://www.mcafee.com>)
- \* Cheyenne Security Center (<http://www.cheyenne.com/security/avirus.html>)

Now, not all hoaxes involve computers. If you are interested in learning about the more interesting non-computer hoaxes currently in circulation, search on the subject "Urban Legends" or look at the site sponsored by About.com (<http://urbanlegends.about.com/culture/urbanlegends/library/blhoax.htm>). There are some very interesting things lurking in cyberspace.

Okay, now that we've covered this issue, back to work...and hey!...Hey!...let's be careful out there!

Submitted by Michael J. Dailey, Senior Member STC/SM and Managing Editor of *TECH comments*

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*Michael is a Lead Technical Writer for Sterling Commerce, an SBC Subsidiary. In addition to producing endless tomes of technical jargon, he has on occasion been known to develop pithy commentaries on a variety of subjects near and dear to his heart. Although meant to inspire, these commentaries might raise your ire, for which the author apologizes in advance.*

## 2001-2002 Networking Meeting

Wednesday, September 19, 2001

Chapter Meeting at Doubletree Hotel, Novi

Hors d'oeuvres at 6:30 p.m.

Chapter business meeting at 7:30 p.m.

### Program

Join us to kick off the new year at our 2001-2002 STC/SM Networking Meeting. This is your chance to greet old friends and to make new ones. Our chapter is hosting the Region 4 Conference in November and you'll hear the exciting plans for that event. Meet the board members, learn about chapter projects and plans and find out how you can support the chapter by volunteering to help. Discover how the chapter list server can assist you in your job search, or help you find just the right person for that opening at your company.

This is your night if you are looking for a job or looking for someone to fill a job! If you're seeking a new position, come to the meeting and let us know you're in the market. If you're looking for a technical communicator, this is one meeting you should attend. You'll get a chance to publicize that open position at your company and meet people who are interested in that position.

Bring plenty of business cards!

### Registration

The registration deadline is Wednesday, September 12. Please register by the deadline and pay in advance.

Members: \$15

Students: \$5

Non-members: \$20

Make checks payable to STC/SM.

Register by mail, e-mail, telephone, or on the web. Please do not register more than once. If you have registered by e-mail, telephone, or on the web, please note that you have already registered when you mail your check.

**web:** [www.stc-sm.org](http://www.stc-sm.org)

**e-mail:** [iriscomms@earthlink.net](mailto:iriscomms@earthlink.net)

**telephone:** (734) 677-8287

**mail:** Nancy M. Sock  
Iris Communications  
PMB #235  
2370 E. Stadium  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

### Directions

**Address:** Doubletree Hotel Novi  
27000 Sheraton Drive  
Novi, Michigan 48377

**Telephone:** (248) 348-5000

### From I-94 and 275:

Take I-275 North to I-96 West. Take Exit 162, Novi/Walled Lake, across Novi Road to the hotel.

### From I-696:

Take I-696 West to I-96 West. Take Exit 162, Novi/Walled Lake, across Novi Road to the hotel.

### From Lansing:

Take I-96 East to Exit 162. Turn left on Novi Road to the hotel.

### From Ann Arbor:

Take M-14 East to I-275 North. Take I-275 North to I-96 West. Take Exit 162, Novi/Walled Lake, across Novi Road to the hotel.

2001-2002 Board Calendar			
Date	Time	Event	Location
"September 10, 2001"	6:30	Board Meeting	TBA
"September 19, 2001"	6:30	Networking Program	Novi
"October 1, 2001"	6:30	Board Meeting	TBA
"October 16, 2001"	6:30	Program Meeting	TBA
"November 3, 2001"		Region 4 Conference	Ypsilanti
"November 5, 2001"	6:30	Board Meeting	TBA
"December 3, 2001"	6:30	Board Meeting	TBA
"January 7, 2002"	6:30	Board Meeting	TBA
"January 17, 2002"	6:30	Program Meeting	TBA
"February 4, 2002"	6:30	Board Meeting	TBA
"February 19, 2002"	6:30	Program Meeting	TBA
"March 4, 2002"	6:30	Board Meeting	TBA
"March 20, 2002"	6:30	Program Meeting	TBA
"April 1, 2002"	6:30	Board Meeting	TBA
"April 20, 2002"		Single-sourcing seminar	TBA
"May 5-8, 2002"		STC International Conference	Nashville
"May 13, 2002"	6:30	Board Meeting	TBA
"May 16, 2002"	6:30	Program Meeting	TBA
"June 3, 2002"	6:30	Board Meeting	TBA
"June 11, 2002"	6:30	Program Meeting - Volunteer Celebration	TBA

## **TECH comments**

**STC/SM**  
**P.O. Box 1289**  
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