

Stimulus

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From the President

Welcome to 1999-2000

by John Holgate

John is our chapter's President. He is currently working as a technical writer for data-analysis software at Cognos.

Welcome to the 1999-2000 year of the Eastern Ontario chapter of the Society for Technical Communication. In the July/August edition of *Stimulus* you had a chance to meet many of the members of this year's executive. In this edition, you're going to find out about some of the activities and events planned for this year.

Many thanks to Lynda Simons, our Past President. She has served the chapter in various leadership positions over the years and has contributed greatly to its success. A personal word of thanks to her for the valuable guidance she provides to me on a regular basis. She has smoothed the transition path greatly with her insight and assistance.

Program and Education

We're pleased that once again we're offering some of our programs in conjunction with the Institute of Technical Editors (ITE). The ITE-sponsored programs give you an opportunity to see things from the sometimes mysterious editor's point of view.

Our first event of the year is the Wine and Cheese Party at the Dows Lake Pavilion on September 23. It provides a great opportunity to meet other chapter members and to have some fun in a relaxed atmosphere.

This year's monthly programs will be held at a new location: the Best Western Macie's Hotel. The hotel is easy to access from the Queensway and by OC Transpo. Light food and beverages will be provided. We're pleased the prices for

the monthly programs will be the same as last year: \$5 for students, \$8 for members, and \$15 for non-members.

The program lineup looks like this right now, although it is subject to change:

October: Single-sourcing (STC)

November: Controlled English (ITE)

January: Writing for the Web (STC)

February: STC Competition Awards Ceremony (STC)

March: Document Management (STC)

April: Panel Discussion on Style Guides (ITE)

May: STC Annual General Meeting and Election of Officers (STC)

It's great to have not one, but two Program Managers this year. Please help out Marnie Connolly and Doreen deMunnik in any way that you can, and pass on your ideas for program events to them.

This summer, we conducted a poll which asked what your favourite program topics are. The most popular topic was HTML Help, which is emerging as a standard in online help. As a result, Visnja Beg, our Education Manager, has put together an attractive full-day, hands-on seminar on HTML Help. Watch for more information soon about this exciting seminar. Please don't hesitate to contact Visnja with suggestions for our education programs and to help her out.

Competitions

The chapter's Online and Technical Communication competitions are already under way under the leadership of Gordon Brown, the Technical Communication Manager, and Tara Bourbeau, the Online Competition Manager. For more information about these competitions, see the brochure that was mailed to you in early September, or check our web site (www.stceo.org/compet.htm). Please contact Gordon and Tara to help out with the competitions in any way that you can. We especially need judges.

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Welcome to 1999-2000

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Membership and Volunteers

The Eastern Ontario chapter is made up of more than 250 members. It is vital for us to keep track of who you are so that we can serve the needs of our membership. Scott Wahl is this year's Membership Manager and Volunteer Co-ordinator. He leads a volunteer team that produces the chapter's annual Membership Directory. Scott also maintains a list of chapter members who have volunteered to help run our programs and events. Please contact Scott if you are interested in volunteering.

Public Relations and Communications

Our public relations programs this year are in the hands of Bonnie Stuart Anderson, our PR Manager. We plan to increase our public presence this year by mounting effective publicity campaigns. Our chapter's mission statement reminds us that one of our main tasks is to promote the field of technical communications to the community at large. Please contact Bonnie with your suggestions to help us accomplish this important part of our mission as a chapter.

Some of you may have recently visited the chapter's website (www.stceo.org). Robin Kelsey, this year's Web Manager, has implemented a new look to the site. We plan to add in other new features over the year, including discussion groups. Visit our website often; it's always changing. Another good reason to visit our website is to take a look at the job postings (www.stceo.org/jobs.htm). This service is maintained by Robin, who is also our Employment Manager. Contact him to offer your assistance and ideas.

Stimulus is our chapter's newsletter. The Newsletter Editor is Tahirah Shadforth. One of her goals this year is to integrate the content of the newsletter with the content of the website. The newsletter will be available in both paper and online formats, and the website will provide updates and background material.

Our representative to the STC's Canadian Issues Committee is Theresa Peddle. She represents our chapter in the larger STC world. Please don't hesitate to contact Theresa if you have ideas about the way our chapter can interact with other Canadian chapters.

Administrative Council Activities

Sarah Vallieres serves as Vice-President this year. One of her roles is to coordinate Special Interest Groups (SIGs). Watch for more information about SIGs in the near future. This year's Treasurer, Rick Lorenz, keeps watch over our finances. We plan to provide updates of our financial state in every edition of *Stimulus*. Our correspondence and administrative tasks are handled by Jeannie Bacon, this year's Secretary.

I feel honoured to have been elected to serve as President of the chapter. I hope to keep everything running smoothly over the year. Sometimes my position will require me to lead, other times to manage. At all times, I hope to serve you all in the best way possible. Please don't hesitate to let me know about your ideas for the Eastern Ontario chapter of the STC. I look forward to meeting you at this month's Wine and Cheese Party. 🍷

Stimulus

Stimulus is the newsletter of the Eastern Ontario Chapter of the STC. It is distributed free to chapter members, libraries, other STC chapters and interested organizations in the region.

Editor Tahirah Shadforth

Editorial assistance vacant

Design & Layout Lynda Simons (hard copy and PDF)

Re-print Policy

All material herein is copyright of STC Eastern Ontario Chapter. Other STC chapters are welcome to reprint articles from *Stimulus*. In return, we ask that you credit the author and *Stimulus* and send us a copy of the publication containing the article.

Submissions

Stimulus welcomes submissions on topics relevant to technical communicators in the Eastern Ontario area. We reserve the right to edit articles for length, clarity, and suitability.

Please send electronic copy (Mac or PC, .RTF

or .TXT files). Mail diskettes or hand them to the editor at a meeting, or send files via email.

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New executive

by Fawn Vo

This year, Fawn has joined the Stimulus team as Editor for Company Profiles.

Continuing from the last issue of *Stimulus*, the following members round out the new executive for 1999/2000:

Jeannie Bacon, Secretary

A recent graduate from Algonquin College's Technical Writing program, Jeannie has been working in technical communications since January 1999. She also holds a combined Honours B.A in English and Women's Studies, and is currently completing her Masters degree in English Literature.

Theresa Peddle, Canadian Issues Committee

Theresa has worked in technical communications for twelve years, particularly in the telecom and Internet subject areas. She holds a Masters degree in Language and Professional Writing from the University of Waterloo, and has been a member of the STC for the past three years.

Gordon Brown, Print Competition Manager

Gordon began his career in full-time professional communication in 1989, as a print journalist. In 1993, he moved full-time to technical communication at Corel Corporation, where he learned his current specialty in online help design. He is a project leader and information designer with Nortel Networks

and our chapter's 1999-2000 STC print competition manager.

Sharon Morgan, Director

In the past, Sharon has served on the STC executive as President, Public Relations Manager, and Membership Manager. This year she continues to be an active member of the STC and will serve as Director for the *Stimulus* newsletter, and for the membership directory. Sharon holds a B. Comm degree from Carleton University, and was recently promoted from Manager of Integrated Product Publications, to Manager of Education Products at Cognos Incorporated.

Lynda Simons, Past President

Lynda's company, Claritext Publications Inc., provides technical communications consulting services to both the public and private sectors. Services include technical publication project management, technical writing, and technical editing. Claritext also provides training in FrameMaker and technical writing, including structured writing for single-sourcing. Lynda graduated from the Algonquin College Technical Writer Program in 1990 and now serves on the program advisory committee. She also teaches part-time in the program. Lynda has been a member of the chapter executive since 1994. 🐾

Introducing...

New product reviewer

by Richard Stoparczyk

Let me introduce myself. I am Richard Stoparczyk, and I am joining the *Stimulus* team as the editor for Product Reviews. In addition to editing product reviews I will be writing a regular article covering a general area of technological interest to technical writers.

For the next issue, November/December, I will be writing an article on XML. I will be focusing on XML as it relates to HTML and SGML, and what the future appears to be for

this emerging technology. I will have current information from the XML World conference, which is being held in Ottawa from September 13th to September 16th.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for future articles please email them to me at richard@stoparczyk.com. This is also the email address to submit any product reviews for publication. 🐾

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executive

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Competition

How to enter

Mark October 1st on your calendar. That's the early bird entry date for this year's Technical Publications and Online Communication competition. Get your entry in by this date and you'll save \$10 on the entry fee. The final date for entries is October 15.

The annual competition is an opportunity to show off your best stuff and get it evaluated by a panel of experienced technical communicators who volunteer as judges. This year, the chapter is accepting both online and print entries in a combined competition. You can enter either or both of the main categories.

The competition is open to all technical communicators, not just STC members (although members pay a reduced entry fee). You can submit as many entries as you wish. To be eligible, entries must be produced on or after September 1, 1998, must not have been entered in any previous competition, and must have enough technical or scientific content to qualify as "technical communication."

Winners will receive their awards at an STC event later in the year, when all the

winning entries will be on display. Any entries that receive the Distinguished Technical Communication award (the top prize) will qualify to enter the STC's prestigious International Technical Communications Competition. In past years, the chapter has picked up a number of awards at the international level and we're hoping to do it again this year.

This year's competition managers are Tara Bourbeau, who's taken on the online competition, and Gordon Brown, who's responsible for the technical publications competition.

Check our web site (www.stceo.org) for up-to-the minute information. If you're interested in volunteering as a judge, you can contact Tara by email at Tara.Bourbeau@pcdocs.com. You can reach Gordon at gbrown@nortelnetworks.com. ☎

STC Technical Publications Competition
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STC Eastern Ontario Chapter

Mission Statement (1998/99)

Our chapter's mission is to work together in a spirit of community to promote and develop professional technical communication

- ◆ by advancing and facilitating the development of educational programs
- ◆ by setting professional standards
- ◆ by drawing on the strengths of our sustaining and individual members

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