

# Stimulus

Volume 26 No. 6 Jan/Feb 2001

*From the President*

## President's message

by John Holgate

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

Look to the future. Prepare yourself for more times of change.

If you haven't yet renewed your membership in the STC for 2001, consider doing so as soon as possible so that you can keep up-to-date with changes in the technical communication world. You'll soon receive information about the 2001 Annual Conference. You'll also get the results of the STC salary survey, be able to attend chapter activities for free, receive STC

periodicals, and join special interest groups.

Speaking of looking to the future, the February 2001 issue of *Technical Communication* magazine has a special theme: Modeling Information in Electronic Space.

If you're looking to change jobs in the future or are looking for one now, look at the chapter's Job Bank at <http://www.stceo.org>. You'll find a number of open positions both in the Eastern Ontario region and further afield.

Come out to see your peers receive awards at the Competition Awards Night on Thursday, March 29, 2001, from 6 to 9 p.m. at Macie's Best Western on Carling Avenue in Ottawa. There's no cost to attend. Please RSVP to [Gordon.Brown@nortelnetworks.com](mailto:Gordon.Brown@nortelnetworks.com). We need the numbers to plan the refreshments. In the future, you may be receiving an award too! 🐾

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## Competition Awards Night

Better than the Grammys, less predictable than the Oscars, it's time for the Society for Technical Communication, Eastern Ontario Chapter, 2000-2001 Awards Ceremony!

Please join us for a fabulous evening to honor the best in technical communication.

We have an exciting keynote speaker: David Staines, the Dean of Arts at the University of Ottawa and a leading editor in Canadian literary circles. Also, the Best of Show winners—to be officially announced on awards night—will give a presentation about their award-winning document and what made its development such a success. Other award winners will also display their award-winning documentation.

Come and check out the best in our profession. Plus, there will be wine, food, and beer served. What more could you ask for? Come one, come all!

**When:** Thursday, March 29, 2001 from 6 to 9 p.m.

Refreshments and mingling at 6 p.m.

Presentation starts at 6:30 p.m.

**Where:** Macie's Best Western on Carling Avenue in Ottawa

**Cost:** FREE FOR EVERYONE!

Please RSVP to [Gordon.Brown@nortelnetworks.com](mailto:Gordon.Brown@nortelnetworks.com). 🐾

## STC Board of Directors meeting

by Kitty Aughey

*Kitty Aughey is the Director-Sponsor for Region 1.*

The winter STC Board of Directors meeting was held in San Diego, California, USA, on 18-20 January 2001. The temperature stayed in the mid-sixties and I enjoyed it to the maximum ... sunshine does make you feel great!

The STC Board report is below but I would like to add that Region 1 had 13 Distinguished Chapter Service Awards approved, Jane Aronovitch from Toronto and Nan Fritz from Boston were elected as Associate Fellows, and Deborah Sauer from Boston was elected a Fellow!

### Actions taken

- ◆ Formation of three new chapters was approved, bringing the total number of chapters worldwide to 153 (120 regular chapters and 33 student chapters):
  - Australia chapter, with a \$350 USD start-up grant (Region 5).
  - Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute student chapter (Troy, New York, USA), with a \$150 USD start-up grant (Region 1).
  - Hill Country student chapter (San Marcos, Texas, USA), with a \$150 USD start-up grant (Region 5).
- ◆ The following appointments to Society-level committees were approved: Kathryn M. Poe (Manager, STC Public Relations Competition Committee) and Paula Stanzioni (Manager, Education & Research Special Interest Group).
- ◆ Fiscal year 2001 income and expenses as of 31 October 2000 were reviewed and approved. Income and expenses are well within budget. STC will be returning

about two-thirds of a million dollars to chapters to support their fiscal year 2001 programs and activities.

- ◆ A merit grant of \$3,000 USD was awarded to the Mercer University student chapter to build its scholarship fund.
- ◆ A research grant of \$10,000 USD was awarded to Eva R. Brumberger for a study entitled *The Rhetoric of Typography: A Study Investigating Typeface Personality and Its Impact on the Reading Process.*

### Other items of interest

**New STC logo.** A graphic toolkit and templates for STC materials will be made available to chapters (presidents, newsletter editors, and webmasters), Society-level committees, and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and placed on the STC Web site in March. These tools will help guide groups in implementing the new look. Work is underway to redesign the STC Web site. Watch for the first official use of the new logo in the Preliminary Annual Conference Program - out soon!

**Elections.** This year, the balloting process will include an option to vote online. The 2001 election material will contain information necessary to ensure secure online voting. Voting online will be optional—members may still choose to vote by mail.

**Membership.** STC continues to grow at a steady rate, and membership now stands at 23,553. Total membership is projected to reach 26,000 by the end of March. Current distribution of membership: U.S. 87.2%, Canada 8.6%, other countries 4.1%. STC's annualized 10-year growth rate

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## 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.

<b>Editor</b>	Tahirah Shadforth
<b>Editorial assistance</b>	vacant
<b>Design &amp; Layout</b>	Tahirah Shadforth (hard copy and PDF)

### Reprint Policy

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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 e-mail.

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is 4.6%, with growth rates as follows: U.S. 3.9%, Canada 10.8%, other countries 11.7% (the greatest area of growth).

**Membership directory.** The STC membership directory has been placed online. It allows members to search on members' first and last names. The results display the member's name, address, phone, fax, e-mail, chapter, grade, and date joined.

**Annual Conference.** Preparations for the 48th Annual Conference in Chicago, Illinois, USA, in May 2001 are well underway. The conference program committee reviewed nearly 400 proposals and selected about 440 speakers for 256 sessions. About 41 booths have already been contracted for the vendor exhibit.

**Technical Communication journal.** Abstracts and PDFs of the 1996 and 1997 issues have now been posted on the Technical Communication Online Web site. Recommendations from usability studies performed by graduate students at Mercer University have been incorporated in the

Web site. Check it out!

**STC governance.** This year, the STC Board of Directors is conducting a series of workshops at its regular meetings to evaluate governance. This activity is an outgrowth of STC's new mission statement: "Designing the future of technical communication." What model of governance would be most effective in leading STC into that future? Aspects being evaluated include the structure of representation, the way that decisions are made, the balance of volunteer and office staff workloads, and communication patterns. A clear picture of leadership has dominated the workshops: one that focuses on trends, vision, strategy, and best practices; that embraces outside influences; that concentrates on setting policy rather than on operational details. A concluding workshop in May will set short-term and long-term goals for meeting those objectives. 🐘

## Technotes

# New XML mailing list for writers

**X**ML-DOC is a new online mailing list for documentation professionals and anyone else interested in discussing the application of XML tools and techniques to the creation of documentation. Topics that are highly encouraged on the list include:

- ♦ XML-based content and document-management systems;
- ♦ single-sourcing with XML;
- ♦ DocBook, the SGML/XML and data type definition for documentation moving to XML authoring from a FrameMaker environment;
- ♦ converting legacy documents to XML;
- ♦ publishing—transforming and delivering XML content;
- ♦ XML training and certification;
- ♦ document analysis and data modeling and

- ♦ profiling and customizing for multiple audiences and delivery formats.

To subscribe to the list, send a blank e-mail message to [xml-doc-subscribe@egroups.com](mailto:xml-doc-subscribe@egroups.com). You can also subscribe at the XML-DOC Web site, <http://www.egroups.com/subscribe/xml-doc/>

Michael Smith, the list moderator, says, "My hope for XML-DOC is that it will not only help to raise the level of awareness about XML in the documentation community, but also give us, as technical communicators, a clear point of contact with the XML developers and product vendors who are now creating and refining the XML authoring tools, content management software, and XML publishing solutions that many of us will eventually end up using." 🐘

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*(STC members receive a 20% discount by mentioning their membership on course registration.)*

Contact: [info@online-learning.com](mailto:info@online-learning.com)

**Online-Learning.com**

### STC Eastern Ontario Chapter

#### Mission Statement (2000/2001)

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

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