

From the President

Meeting the challenge

by Visnja Beg

Visnja has worked in the field of Technical Communications for 13 years, has been a member of the STCEO for the past four years, and an active member in the chapter for three of those four years. She has held the positions of Education Manager, Vice President, and this year, is President of the chapter. She holds a Bachelor of Journalism with Honours degree from Carleton University's School of Journalism. Currently, Visnja is working as the Documentation Manager for the XDE Automations IPT of Rational Software Corporation in Kanata.

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A warm welcome to everyone to the 2001-2002 season of the Society for Technical Communications, Eastern Ontario chapter.

It is a brand new year, with a new president, many new faces on council, and many innovative and challenging ideas of how to make this season a success for both the council and our members.

This year, while exciting, is one where we will have to face challenges in our profession. The slowdown in the economy and the high-tech industry has meant that we need to address a new set of needs from our membership, because your needs may have changed substantially in the last few months.

To that end, we are planning to implement a mentorship program that will match up junior technical writers

with veterans in the field who can offer their guidance and experience on a more direct basis. What we need for this are many volunteers who would offer their time and experience as mentors. If you are interested, even if you feel you do not have the time that is required, please let our membership manager, Rick Lorenz, or me know. We also need to know if there are junior writers out there who would be interested in enrolling in the program.

Our program meetings this year will offer more time for networking. We will structure the meetings so that there is ample time for both a presentation, and for meeting and talking with others. We hope that this will facilitate camaraderie and a greater sense of community among the members of the chapter.

As always, if you have comments or suggestions on how we can better meet your needs as a member of the STC Eastern Ontario chapter, please feel free to contact me at president@stceo.org. Leave a telephone number and I will be sure to call you back. I look forward to hearing from you. Once again, welcome everyone, to another exciting season! ☛

See the new slate of volunteer council members on Page 4.

Our Annual Wine and Cheese

Our first program offering is the Annual Wine and Cheese Reception that is being held this year on Tuesday, September 25th at Dows Lake Pavilion. Please come out and meet your peers over some munchies and a glass of wine (or other beverage). Admission for all is free. Non-members are also welcome and encouraged to come and find out the benefits of becoming a member or the STC, so tell your friends and coworkers. Stay tuned to our web site (<http://www.stceo.org>) for more information on this event. I hope to meet many of you there. - Visnja

When: Tuesday, September 25, 2001 from 6 to 9 p.m.

Host bar, refreshments, food and plenty of free parking.

Where: Centre Hall, Dow's Lake Pavillion, 1001 Queen Elizabeth Drive in Ottawa

Cost: FREE FOR EVERYONE!

Please RSVP if possible to Rayhana Hossenbux by e-mail at rayhana.hossenbux@cognos.com or register online at our web site <http://www.stceo.org/program.htm>.

Planning a successful chapter year



Leaders Light the Way!
J. Suzanna Laurent
Director-Sponsor Region 5

In STC, we know that leaders are a lot like eagles, they don't flock, and you usually find them one at a time. By accepting a position of responsibility in your chapter, you have already made an important step toward learning to soar like an eagle!

STC offers members many opportunities to practice and improve leadership skills. Whether you are guiding the chapter as an officer, serving as a committee manager, or participating in another way, you can make a difference this year! I encourage you to use this opportunity to sharpen your leadership, time management, and organizational skills. You will find it rewarding-both personally and professionally-and the experience will shine through on the job and on your resume.

A successful chapter year is the result of setting goals and developing plans for achieving them. By now I hope your chapter goals and programs are clearly defined for the coming year-if not, you need to start planning right away. Your chapter's strategic plan may dictate many of your activities, and that is as it should be. Even if you have a strategic plan, it is always helpful to analyze how well the chapter is meeting the members' needs and interests and gather ideas for improving chapter management, programs, and activities. As you plan, remember that good leaders are not restricted by the way things "have always been done." Their leadership is a continuing search for the best way to do things, not necessarily the most familiar way.

Here are some steps for developing chapter goals and planning activities to achieve them. Regardless of the circumstances, following these steps during the planning stage can help everyone achieve more.

- Goals** - Decide what you want to accomplish this year. Ideas gathered from a member survey can help you plan activities to strengthen the whole chapter or specific areas.
- Functions** - Decide who is responsible for achieving each goal. Is there a specific committee or member who will handle this responsibility? Discuss the goals and their achievement with those responsible for them.
- Activities** - Discuss activities that will help you reach the goals. What has been done in the past that should continue? What can be done that is new? Then, develop a list of activities to help achieve the goal. You may be able to choose these activities from the Chapter Achievement Award Guidelines-they are designed to help strengthen your chapter. If necessary, submit your list to the chapter or Administrative Council for approval.
- Action plan** - When will you do it? Once the activities are finalized, put them on your chapter calendar and set a specific date for their completion.
- Celebrate** - Don't forget to celebrate your victories and give plenty of recognition along the way!

The most successful leaders are the ones who recognize the creative potential of the people on their teams and use that potential wisely. 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 your contributions to STC! 🚧

Stimulus

Stimulus is the newsletter of the STC, Eastern Ontario Chapter and is published six times per year. It is distributed free to chapter members, libraries, other STC chapters and interested organizations.

Reprint 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 e-mail articles and advertising copy to rob.hanna@ascan.ca or mail to the address below. Articles and media will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Most major electronic formats are supported for both Mac and PC.

Submission Deadlines

All materials are due on the 15th of the month prior to publication.

Managing Editor

Rob Hanna
rob.hanna@ascan.ca
Tel: (613) 799-0054
Fax: (613) 248-4966

Mailing address

Stimulus Editor, STCEO
P.O. Box 78039
Nepean, ON K2E 1B1

Printing

Allegra Print & Imaging
1069 Bank Street
Tel: (613)730-3000

New Canadian Issues SIG Signing Up New Members

by Alexa Cambell

Would you like to join a group of Canadians? Now who wouldn't want that opportunity? The new Canadian Issues SIG is now signing up new members and you can be a part of this new group. You'll find it's a great way to network with other STC members in Canada and elsewhere, focusing on issues pertinent to Canadians. One of the good features now is that membership is free for the rest of the year.

In May 2001, STC formed a new SIG devoted to improving communication among its Canadian members. I am Alexa Campbell, a long-time member of STC who is serving as SIG manager. I'm inviting Canadian STC members, and others who are interested in Canadian issues, to join this new group.

Right now, STC members can sign up for the Canadian Issues SIG for free until the end of the year. SIG membership dues will be billed in the 2002 STC dues notices scheduled to be sent out in November. To sign up for SIG membership, email your request to

the STC membership department (membership@stc.org).

Keys to the success of any organization are the enthusiasm and support of its members. I hope many of you will step forward to help make this one of the most effective SIGs in STC. We can use volunteers to fill important positions of newsletter editor, webmaster, listserv coordinator and membership coordinator. The tasks are not hard nor take a lot of time; however, they will take your commitment.

We already have established a listserv that will be a good source for exchanging information and ideas. To subscribe to the list, go to <http://lists.stc.org/cgi-bin/lyris.pl?enter=stc-ca-l> and click the "Join stc-ca-l" button. Complete the information and you're there. (Note that the l is a lower case L.)

If you have any questions about the Canadian Issues SIG, please contact me, Alexa Campbell, at (204) 632-2345 or email acampbel@rrc.mb.ca

About the Canadian Issues SIG

Mission statement

The Canadian Issues SIG fosters communication among Canadian members of STC to allow them to exchange information and to discuss issues within STC that

- Are of a particular concern to Canadian members
- Arise by reason of political, socioeconomic, and geographical constraints because the members reside in Canada

Rationale for name

The name reflects the membership of the SIG, and carries on the title of the Canadian Issues Committee, which was formed in 1990. In the ten years of its operation, this committee helped identify and resolve many issues of concern to Canadian members of STC. Membership in the SIG is not necessarily restricted to Canadian members but is open to anyone with an interest in the special needs and concerns of Canadian STC members.

Areas of interest

The Canadian Issues SIG explores the following areas of interest:

- Increasing the technical communications profile and reputation across Canada

- Monitoring, helping shape, and publicizing technical communication education in Canada
- Helping evolve standards to encourage a consistency in the technical communications courses offered across Canada
- Communicating the value of technical communication to business, industry and academe
- Enabling educational institutions, industry and practitioners to share ideas about technical communication
- Promoting a professional development program for Canadian technical communicators, by making it easier to advertise such programs

Goals

The following are the goals of the Canadian Issues SIG:

- To link Canadian chapters, which are spread out geographically, and which lack a unified voice in STC internationally
- To provide opportunities for Canadian members to communicate about needs, concerns and issues that are unique to Canada by virtue of geography, economics or politics
- To provide a venue for promoting professional development activities for Canadian members

executive

**STC Eastern Ontario Chapter
2001-2002 Executive**

President
Visnja Beg
visnjab@bradsys.com

Vice-President
Gordon Brown
gbrown@nortelnetworks.com

Treasurer
John Holgate
john.holgate@cognos.com

Secretary
Mindy Sichel
mindy.sichel@cognos.com

Program Manager
Bonny Grenier
bonny.grenier@cognos.com

**Membership Manager,
Volunteer Co-ordinator**
Rick Lorenz
rick_lorenz@hotmail.com

Public Relations Manager
Rayhana Hossenbux
rayhana.hossenbux@cognos.com

Competition General Manager
Harold Floysvik
haroldf@sympatico.ca

Education Manager
vacant

Newsletter Editor
Rob Hanna
rob.hanna@ascan.ca

**Web Manager and Employment
Manager**
Robin Kelsey
webmaster@stceo.org

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promote and develop professional
technical communication.

Web site
<http://www.stceo.org>

STC Eastern Ontario Chapter

**Mission Statement
(2001/2002)**

Our chapter's mission is
to work together in a
spirit of community to

Address
P.O. Box 78039
1460 Merivale Road
Nepean, Ontario K2E 1B1

Algonquin Technical Writer Web site
<http://www.cst.algonquinc.on.ca>

Telephone
(613) 860-0542

STCEO October Program

Thursday October 18, 2001 STC,
Eastern Ontario Chapter presents:

Suzanne Skublics, VP of Engineering
and Education, Online-Learning.com
“XML and single-sourcing”

**Presented free to all members and
guests starting at 6 p.m. Dow's Lake
Pavillion 1001 Queen Elizabeth Dr.**