TechniScribe

Orange County STC Newsletter

SOCIETY FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Contents

Two Down, One to Go

By Beau Cain, Director, the Region Known Previously as 8

The Board of Directors meeting at the Society's Annual Conference in Las Vegas marked the end of my second year as a Director, and the beginning of my third and final year in that office. In the two years that have passed, Region 8 chapters and members have made notable contributions to the future operation of our Society. I would like to see Region 8 lead the Society into its next round of changes during my final year as the Director of our region.

Changing Communication Technology

I can hardly believe it, but STC's Communication Director Maurice Martin has already posted STC's very first podcast on the Society's web site, *http://www.stc.org/stcmembers/podcasts01.asp* (member login required). Although podcasting isn't bleeding-edge technology, this deployment of a new communication technology seems to have happened at light speed compared to decades of the Society's seeming technophobia. Not only that, but Maurice is ready to publish the Society's second podcast, too!

I'm pleased that the Society's first podcast is the audio recording of the Leadership Day presentation, *Chapter Public Relations Best Practices Forum*, presented by my long-time STC buddy, George Slaughter, of the Houston chapter. The second podcast will be the audio recording of the Leadership Day presentation about the new *stc-cdx.org* site ("STC Communication Department eXperimental web site") which was given by TransAlpine chapter's commanding Jang Graat. Cleverly, *stc-cdx.org* is the site where these podcasts will be available for downloading.

Everyone, please listen and learn, then contribute! Bravo George, Jang, and Maurice!

Changing Criteria For Recognition

During the past two years, fewer and fewer Region 8 chapters have applied for Chapter Achievement Awards (CAA), but more chapters have been contenders for my pick as Pacesetter Award winning chapters. The Society's Pacesetter Award is given to no more than one chapter in each region in a year for successfully deploying

Publication Policies

TechniScribe is published 12 times a year as a benefit to the members of the Orange County Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication. The goal of the publication is to reflect the interests, needs, and objectives of OCSTC members. *TechniScribe* strives to be an advocate for, and an inspiration to, technical communicators by keeping them connected to each other and to opportunities for professional growth.

Articles published in this newsletter may be reprinted in other STC publications if permission is obtained from the author, credit is properly given and one copy of the reprint is sent to the *TechniScribe* managing editor.

Submission Information

The editorial team retains and exercises the right to edit submitted and requested material for clarity, length, and appropriateness.

When submitting material, please remember to:

- Include a 25-word biography about yourself.
- Send articles in Word format, RTF (Rich-Text Format), ASCII, or in the body of an e-mail message.
- Send material to the managing editor (**jmarchant@adelphia.net**) five weeks before the date it will be published.

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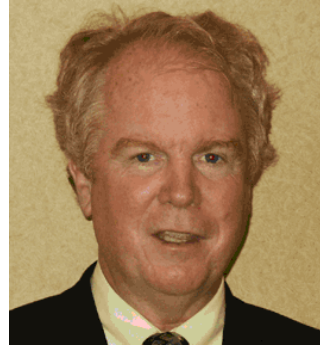Full page $80

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$10/year to members of other STC chapters

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President's Message

By Jeff Randolph, OCSTC Chapter President

A few months ago I wrote about Patrick Lencioni's book, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*. As a follow-up report to that book, at a recent department meeting I attended at Beckman Coulter, a fellow employee who was certified by The Table Group (Mr. Lencioni's management consulting company), spoke, and we learned that one way to overcome these dysfunctions was to know your own and your co-workers' work personality.

I will spend the next few columns dissecting two books that are on our company CEO's reading list. They are *Winning*, by Jack Welch (with Suzy Welch) and *Good to Great*, by Jim Collins. On one level, the books might be considered works written by managers for managers. I must admit that I, at best, skimmed the chapters having to do with mergers and acquisitions in *Winning*. However, both books are filled with ideas and action plans that have immediate application in our personal and professional lives, as well as companies we work for (or own or control), and—relating to STC—how we function as a chapter business entity.

Mr. Welch's book draws upon his 41 years of experience at General Electric (GE), the last 21 years of which he served as CEO. (He retired in 2001.) GE is generally regarded as the best-run company in the country, and ironically, is a "comparison company" in *Good to Great*. The Collins book is actually a post-doctoral study assembled by a team of researchers. The team looked at five different companies, and asked why they made the move "from good to great" while similar companies floundered, were acquired, or disappeared.

The point is that hopefully, if our plans go well, around the time I wrap up the reviews, we will have a chapter meeting topic featuring "What Employers Are Looking For in Job Applicants." This topic was introduced to me by Walter Hanig, senior member and past president of San Diego STC.

As we talked, Walter suggested including job hunting from the perspective of the hiring manager.

Next Meeting

Topic: How to Make a Six-Figure Income as a Technical Communicator

Speaker: Jack Molisani

When: Tuesday, July 18, 2006, 6-9 p.m.

Where: DoubleTree Club Hotel
Hutton Centre Drive
Santa Ana, CA 92702
714.751.2400

Cost:
Members with reservations....................$22
Students with reservations.....................$16
Nonmembers with reservations $27
Walk-ins or those registering after
the deadline $31
No-shows billed $22

Reservations:
Due by midnight, Friday, July 14, 2006

Registration:
Online at: *http://www.ocstc.org/dinres.asp*

Directions to the Doubletree Club Hotel

This map depicts the area around the I-405 and SR-55 freeway interchange. The star below indicates the hotel location. Parking is FREE.
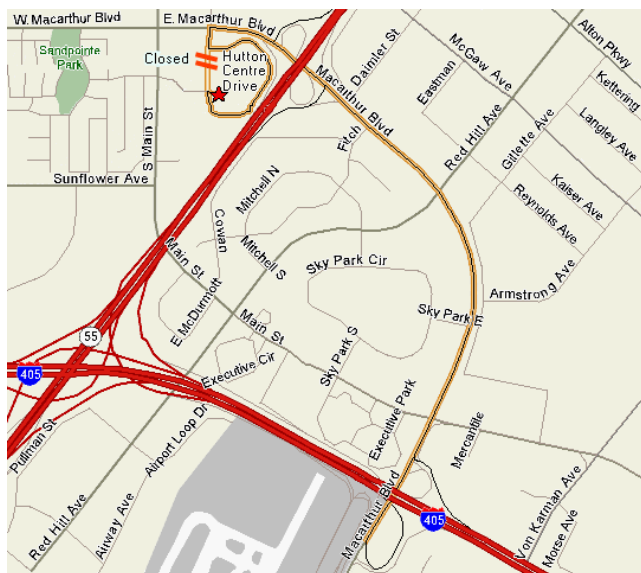
Editor's Desk

By Jim Marchant, TechniScribe *Managing Editor*

Welcome to my first official edition as managing editor of *TechniScribe*. The best compliment you could pay me now would be to say "I don't notice much difference." There are a few tweaks here and there, but the radical changes are behind the scenes.

Flush with bravado from having built a moderately elaborate Microsoft Word template at work, I decided to try the same with *TechniScribe*. "Why," you might ask, "would someone inflict such torture on himself?" I've been wondering that myself.

In a nutshell, I didn't want to install or learn OCSTC's copy of Adobe Framemaker. Although I'm fairly fluent in QuarkXPress, I just didn't want to invest in this application, with its questionable future. Plus, Word files can be passed around the editing staff for "track-changes" modifications, avoiding the use of faxes, for which I'm not equipped.

But the conversion is proving to be daunting, and is by no means a *fait accompli.* Watch this space for news of ongoing adventures.

—♦—

The recipient of an OCSTC scholarship in 2004 returns the favor with an article on a controversial composition program at Texas Tech University.

Before receiving the scholarship, Trudy Hernandez wrote another *TechniScribe* article for the March 2003 edition. She graduated the same year from California State University, Long Beach (CSULB), with a BA in English (Special Emphasis: Technical and Professional Writing). She continued at CSULB and received an MA in English.

So, freshman English composition—is it a class to be endured, or is it a critical, significant step on the road to writing, especially technical writing? Into which camp of opposing methodological forces, as described by Trudy, do you fall?

Trudy's article will be continued in the August issue, and we may have a follow-up response from a different observer for a later edition.

—♦—

Installed or learned any new software? Read a professional book? These pages are always open to tales of your experiences. ♦*TS*♦

In Search of Better Writing Instruction:
The Conflict of the Academic and the Writer

By Trudy Hernandez, Project Director, Academic Affairs, California State University

"…academic writing—stuffy pedantic, the price of a career, academic writing—pure, muscular, lean, taut, the language of truth and reason; academic writing—language stripped of the false dressings of style and fashion, a tool for inquiry and critique."
—*David Bartholomae*

The system for teaching basic writing to college students has experienced its share of conflicts. The results of two national companion surveys in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (3/10/06) reveal that college professors are much more concerned than high school teachers with the writing readiness of freshmen. In their assessment of students' writing ability, 44 percent of professors reported that students are not well prepared for college-level writing—compared to 10 percent of teachers.

The breakdown, report college faculty, is namely the lack of written preparation. Further apparent in this nationwide sample of public high school teachers and public and private college faculty members is the huge expectations gap over written assignments. "Twenty-five percent of English teachers never assign longer papers [five pages or more], as compared with just 6 percent of their college counterparts," reports *The Chronicle*.

If what professors and teachers view as appropriate writing abilities of high school graduates meets with debate, is it any wonder why academicians and scholars clash over what constitutes good writing instruction once those same students reach college? Peter Elbow writes, "I suspect that if we could be more sensible about how we create and define the roles of academic and writer in our culture, the conflict might not be necessary" ("Being a Writer vs. Being an Academic: A Conflict in Goals").

By taking a look at the current controversy brewing at Texas Tech University over a computer system meant to revolutionize freshman composition, it is worth exploring the ongoing debate in writing instruction, incorporate possible responses and approaches of influential researchers based on their scholarship in the area, and demonstrate how one writing program (geared to ease enrollment pressures) is brutal for thousands who come to college not quite prepared to engage in college writing.

Introduced four year ago, the first-year composition program at Texas Tech, known as Interactive Composition Online (ICON), provides the perfect backdrop for demonstrating conflicts in how we arrive at knowledge about writing and instruction.

Rather than just enhance or reinvigorate English composition designed for first-year students, "Texas Tech is using a computer system to entirely reinvent the experience." Unsurprisingly, the system "has divided the English department, pitting professors who say it not only saves time but prevents biased grading against those who find it dehumanizing and Orwellian" (*The Chronicle of Higher Education,* 3/10/06).

All Electronic

With the exception of requiring students to meet briefly once a week with their "classroom instructor" to review grammar, style, and assignments (standardized across 70 sections of the two required first-year composition courses), the mechanized writing system at Texas Tech takes place in an entirely electronic environment.

Assignments include a three-draft essay, reflective "writing reviews," which comment on a student's own work, and two peer reviews of other students' work. Each piece of writing is submitted online and appears in a queue of unidentified numbered documents. From there, the work is read by at least two anonymous "document instructors" from a group of 60 to 70 part-time graduate students who provide comment and assign it a numerical grade. If the two grades span a difference of eight points, the work undergoes a third review where the unconventional process is, once again, repeated by a third document instructor.

Cheaper Scoring

The anonymous grading system, along with a standardized syllabus, is designed to ease bias, ensure consistent instruction, and give the more than 3,000 enrolled writing students more time to complete an average of 35 assignments per student, per semester.

One benefit is easy to establish from the outset, as remarks from Elbow would seem to indicate, "…of course, evaluation takes a lot more time and work. To rank you just have to put down a number; holistic scoring of exams is cheaper than analytic scoring"

("Ranking, Evaluating, and Liking: Sorting Out Three Forms of Judgment").

Despite this, critics of the writing system claim separating instruction from grading promotes a fragmented environment and threatens the traditional student-teacher relationship.

Students as "Victims"

David Bartholomae would agree—perhaps even going so far as to label students of the Texas Tech process "victims." In *The Study of Error*, Bartholomae claims that a breakdown in teaching a student to write occurs when utilizing an analytic approach to error, or one he refers to as an "investigative approach."

Here, a writing instructor "charts the patterns of error" and categorizes them as verb endings, noun plurals, syntax, and spelling. The result? "One is no longer teaching a student to "write" but to deal with a limited number of very specific kinds of errors, each of which would suggest its own appropriate response."

Interestingly enough, one Texas Tech document instructor (an MA student in technical writing) admits using search functions to find frequently made student errors. Elbow would refer to these errors as "the odd writing behaviors of test-takers" resulting from our transformation of the "writing" process into that of "being tested" ("Being a Writer vs. Being an Academic").

Nevertheless, Bartholomae contends error analysis can assist instruction by having students share in the process of investigating, interpreting, and re-strategizing the patterns of error in their writing. Yet, first-year comp students at Texas Tech are, indeed, "victims" of a disjointed process, robbed of their ability to partake in the very process Bartholomae promotes.

Industrialized Process

Perhaps James Berlin could best appreciate the sterility of Texas Tech's content-laden, industrialized writing process—one empirically verifiable to a staggering tune of 140,000 student compositions a year. After all, it was Berlin who, in *Rhetoric and Reality*, proclaimed (albeit in 1987) how "current-traditional rhetoric continued to be a force in most English departments and survives even today." And

it is exactly the "barrenness of current-traditional rhetoric, the staple of the freshman course," Berlin decrees that appears to be alive and well at Texas Tech.

Note how the writing program parallels the current traditional approach to the teaching of writing:

- Orderly mechanism (anonymous, numbered, e-environment),
- Emphasis on the superficial (error analysis), and
- Scientific rhetorical method of development (classroom instructors vs. document instructors).

University administrators contend standardized assignments, evaluation criteria, and shared grading "inject objectivity into the subjective process." Yet Elbow asserts the most useful thing for writing students is the infusion of the smallest fraction of subjectivity. And, Elbow's use of grids ("Ranking, Evaluating, and Liking"), succeeds in accomplishing that—not necessarily telling writers what's right or wrong, but giving students "an account of what is happening" to the reader as their words are being read.

This quick response not only enables the writing instructor to vary the criteria depending on the assignment, but also succeeds in dispelling anxiety that can often lead to unproductive assessments of students focusing more on grades and less on learning.

More Writing

Proponents of the Texas Tech program insist students benefit merely by writing more—nearly three times more than traditional writing programs. Yet tradeoffs, like an increase in class size (up 35 students per section from 25) and a reduction of class time (by half), actually cheat students from fully discovering and developing rewrite strategies necessary to form and shape their argument.

To be continued in the August 2006 issue…

Trudy is the author of an article in the March 2006 issue of TechniScribe. *She received an OCSTC scholarship for graduate studies in 2004 and graduated with an MA degree from California State University, Long Beach, in English (Rhetoric and Composition)* ◆ᴛʃ◆

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June Meeting Review

By Marcia Couey, Senior Member OCSTC

As technical writers, we use Information Architecture (IA) principles and methodologies every day to help us structure and use:

- Web sites
- Web pages
- Books
- Manuals
- Policies and procedures
- Advertising and marketing documents
- Libraries (physical and online)

At the June meeting presentation we reviewed the six principles and 14 elements (formerly 12 steps) or methodologies applicable to any IA project with Bill Darnall , our own senior member, freelance writer and trainer, published author and co-chair of the OCSTC Education Committee.

Bill also set up the guidelines for conducting a five-minute IA Workshop for Element 8. The workshop required us to identify the information needs of "user personas" in the creation of a company directory. All user personas need name, telephone number and e-mail address information.

For the workshop, each "table team" selected one user type and identified that user's directory information needs. They were:

Jim, the new employee, who needs an office, name and title map and pictures of key personnel, because he is totally on "information overload."

Jane, the "temp" telephone operator, who needs alphabetical directories (one sorted by first name and another sorted by last name) and a functional directory, for callers asking for contacts in a specific department or for contacts to solve a specialized problem (e.g., tech support, purchasing agent for advertising, or Human Resources).

Doug, the mail delivery clerk, needs department names, mail stops, and physical locations for interoffice delivery, and pickup locations for external postal services.

Fred, the facilities manager, who needs a different map than the new employee. He needs a map or diagrams with electrical, telephone, and connectivity information, and associated department or cost center identification.

Larry/Lauren, the corporate executive, needs detailed personal (home) and business contact information for senior staff, along with long distance or international calling information. ♦ᴛꜱ♦

innovative operations or programs that can be adopted beneficially by other chapters. It was a tough call to distinguish the Orange County chapter for its radically different strategy and plan to make their operation self-supporting. The Community Achievement Award Evaluation Committee (CAAEC) is now accepting input from chapter leaders to help redesign the CAA criteria to make it more relevant to community operations. I encourage every volunteer who has served as an elected leader to send their suggestions to me before July 1. As well, I thank Berkeley chapter President Joe Devney for already giving me his table of very well-considered suggestions. If you want to read his list of suggestions, e-mail me.

Changing Community Representation

Separating community sponsorship from the Directors is the most profound and pervasive change that the Board has adopted for the Society in decades. Members now elect their Directors at large rather than by region, because, by law, directors of non-profit organizations must represent all members, not just members in their region.

The Board of Directors recognizes the importance of chapter and SIG activities in the Society's operations, and realizes that these entities deserve Board-level attention. We now have the Leadership Community Resource (LCR), a standing committee of volunteers that communicates with all the chapters and SIGs, and that reports directly to the Society's Executive Director.

The truly great aspect of the LCR is that since it is a committee, it allows far greater volunteer participation in chapter and SIG assistance than did the old Director-Sponsor model. Now you can volunteer to assist communities—not just your chapter or your SIG, but all STC communities— through participation in the LCR. Contact the LCR through De Murr (**deirdre.a.murr@disney.com**) to get involved and become known as a great servant leader in our Society.

Changing the Community Funding Model

There's not a chapter or SIG officer among us who doesn't recognize this: community funding is changing. The old system of rebating a small portion of a member's dues to the chapters and SIGs to which he or she "belongs" is under scrutiny. In fact, the Board of Directors now avoids using the word

"rebate" when speaking of community funding. Instead, they use the word "funding" to help them keep an open mind about how member money might reach chapters and SIGs.

What does this mean for your chapter? I believe it means that every chapter must examine its operation to determine how it can become a moneymaker and then prepare to charge for its services. I hope that each and every community identifies the value they provide their affiliates, determines an attractive price for that affiliation, and sells it. What can your chapter sell that would pay for its operation? What services are you willing to pay your chapters or SIGs for?

And how does this align with the Society's operation? Isn't STC a non-profit charitable organization? Are we allowed to sell services in order to accumulate financial reserves that help us assure continued operation and service to our members and the community at large?

Read on.

Changing Our Strategic Plan

I encourage every chapter leader to examine the Society's new strategic plan:

www.stc.org/ppt/orgChart0506.ppt

In particular, pay close attention to the new strategic objectives chart in slide 6, and the explanatory slides 7 through 12. In keeping with the nature of our craft, even the design of this strategic objectives chart is different from our old Strategic Plan. There are concentric circles that identify our core values, surrounded by objectives stated in segments.

The core values are:

*   Communicating effectively
*   Cultivating a risk-taking global culture
*   Supporting STC with leading-edge technology

The objectives are:

*   Telling our powerful story
*   Implementing a strategic business model
*   Growing relationships and choosing partners
*   Making money
*   Growing and supporting our leaders
*   Improving practice through research and education

This is radically different from recent strategic plans in that it is strongly business- and marketing-

Recollections:… How I Became a Professional Writer

By Bill Darnall, Senior Member OCSTC

< Continued from the June issue.

As a development engineer in the late 1970s, I discovered companies were eager to pay for well-written manuals that explained how "new-fangled" microprocessors worked. Inexpensive word processors did not exist. To support documentation work at a small technology company in Tustin, I personally ordered phototypesetting equipment. Part 1 in my story concluded at the point when the two principals in the company decided to stop being partners. Next, the doors were locked and I was faced with no place to put my equipment—which was somewhere in transit.

What seemed like a good idea only a few weeks earlier had morphed into a living, breathing nightmare. To partially pay for the new equipment, I had negotiated a new mortgage. All things considered, moving out of our home was out of the question. We had two kids in high school. Fifty thousand dollars worth of phototypesetting equipment was about to arrive. But I was not sure where to have the equipment delivered.

We did not have space in our house to set up a business. Actually, I was not too sure what the business was going to be. And to complicate matters, I realized I had not yet been trained to use the new equipment.

Three days later the equipment arrived. Workers unloaded the truck and set five large, heavy boxes in our front yard. Fortunately, it was summertime in Southern California. Rain was not an issue. But the neighbors' sprinklers, however, were. Large plastic sheets were pressed into service.

I found a 3,000-square-foot unit in a nearby industrial complex. For an individual, the manager required six month's rent in advance for a one-year lease. However, for a company, he only required the first and last month's rent. I quickly explained that we were a company. "Its name?," he asked? I coughed, and explained we were in the publishing business. He asked again. This time I asserted, firmly, "Professional Publications Limited."

Never spontaneously select a business name. Always check for similar names nearby, or worse yet, an identical one. If you are operating in Orange County, make sure an existing company in Long Beach does not have the same name. For the next few years we received numerous calls for Professional Publications Limited in Long Beach. I can only assume they received a few calls for my company.

Establishing a new business was an education. We subsequently capitalized on our experiences by publishing a book on how to organize a small business in Orange County.

The next few years were hectic. I cashed in some of my life insurance and refinanced our VW bus to pay the bills. Initially, we received training on how to use the typesetting equipment, but we didn't do much real publishing the first year. We did produce a lot of business cards, flyers, and advertising brochures. A nearby quick printer provided sales and marketing support. During many long nights at the office, I began to question my sanity. In retrospect, it was good hands-on experience.

Then it happened! The good news was, we landed a real book contract from a large financial institution, for editing, publishing, printing, binding, and delivering 15,000 copies of a hardback book. The bad news: We had no idea how to do it.

To be continued in the August 2006 issue… ◆TS◆

Two Down, One to Go

< Continued from Page 7

oriented. And our communities need to be just that, because we are recovering from losses related to the struggling economy.

To that end, I ask you to contact Presidents Jeff Randolph and Adele Sommers in order to get solid ideas about how to make your chapter a well-marketed, money-making business. I urge you to do so this month, as we begin our last year of serving Region 8's members and colleagues together.

Orange County STC web site: *http://www.ocstc.org/*

San Luis Obispo STC web site: *http://www.slostc.org/*

As well, I urge each chapter officer to read STC President Paula Berger's slideshow, *The New World of STC*:

http://www.stc.org/ppt/orgChart0506.ppt

Pay close attention to slides 14 through 22. They are the graphic depiction of the managing entities that will drive STC's operations this year, and they name the people you will want to contact in order to get answers or give service.

Two down, one year to go, colleagues. Let's make Region 8 lead the way in beneficial changes for STC, our craft, our colleagues, and ourselves. ◆TS◆

2006 Spotlight Awards: Call for Volunteers and Judges

Southern California Technical Communication Competition

By Carrie Damschroder, OCSTC Senior Member

For the third year in a row, the nine Southern California STC chapters are sponsoring a Spotlight Awards technical communication competition that provides members in this area with an opportunity to showcase their talents as writers and artists.

Judges and other volunteers for the competition are needed.

The areas where help is needed are:

- Managing entries
- Managing online judges
- Banquet planning
- Awards
- Web site
- Public relations

As a judge, you'll see some of the best work in technical communication, help to set the standards for excellence in our profession, and add prestigious experience to your résumé.

As a volunteer, you'll build your professional network, gain leadership experience, and make a

OCSTC Members at Las Vegas

Mary Ann Howell, Suzanne Madison, and Kathey Schuster from the OCSTC chapter attended the STC 53rd national convention in Las Vegas.

significant contribution to the Southern California STC community.

The competition committee starts meeting in July. If you are interested in judging or volunteering, contact Karen Bergen at **kbergen@comcast.net** .

Carrie is the Spotlight Awards Public Relations Manager
◆TS◆

Society Pages

TechniScribe Copyright and Trademark Statement

If you would like to receive e-mail notification about upcoming OCSTC meetings, visit *http://www.ocstc.org/list_redirect.asp.* Click **Join.** This list broadcasts only meeting notices and STC announcements

OCSTC Employment Information

Our job listing is entirely online at the OCSTC web site; pages are updated as jobs are submitted.

Staff Jobs

http://www.ocstc.org/employme.asp

Contract Jobs

www.ocstc.org/contractme.asp

If you have an inquiry or a job to post, e-mail Jeff Randolph at **erandolp@ix.netcom.com.**

A limited number of printed copies of the OCSTC web site listings are available at monthly chapter meetings.

Society-Level Job Listings

STC maintains job listings on the Internet. You can download the listings from the STC web site at *http://www.stc.org/jobsdatabase.asp.*

Orange Juice: Membership News

By Betsy Malone, OCSTC 2nd Vice President, Membership

OCSTC Members: 250
STC Members: 13,925

Welcome our newest OCSTC members:

- Ryan Bernal
- Larry Peyton
- Penny Salisbury-Coleman
- James Shipley

We are pleased to announce that the following members have attained the rank of Senior Member:

- Gina Beckman
- John Cheraz
- Joy Daludado
- Nancy Lapic
- Jane Popp
- Brooke Rye
- Bruce Tepley
- Richard Thompson

How many of our OCSTC members will be hosting a picnic and grilling on the barbecue this summer? Here are some fun cookout facts to share with friends and family.

The Fourth of July Cookout

As with many holidays, the Fourth of July celebration includes food, drink, and the realization of how fortunate we are as a nation.

More than 66 million Americans said they took part in a barbecue during the previous year, and it's probably safe to assume a large number of these events took place on the Fourth.

http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-32.html

Although we do not have a fixed menu for this particular holiday, you can count on traditional favorites such as hamburgers, hot dogs, chicken, ribs, garden salads, potato salad, chips, and watermelon.

In honor of our national holiday, we thought we'd have a little fun with some statistics (who said statistics have to be boring?) and find out where this traditional fare came from:

There's a 1-in-6 chance the beef on your backyard grill came from Texas. The Lone Star state was the leader in the production of cattle and calves, accounting for 7.2 billion pounds of the nation's total production of 42.2 billion pounds last year.

OCSTC Members at Las Vegas
Guy Ball, Elaine Randolph, Jeff Randolph, and Steve Blossom from the OCSTC chapter gathered at a restaurant in Las Vegas during the 53rd annual STC national convention.

There's a 1-in-4 chance your hot dogs and ribs originated in Iowa. The Hawkeye state had a total inventory of 14.9 million hogs and pigs as of March 1, 2003 — about one-fourth of the nation's total.

The chicken on your barbecue grill probably came from one of the top broiler-producing states: Georgia, Arkansas, Alabama, North Carolina, and Mississippi. The value of production in each of these states exceeded $1 billion in 2002. These states combined for well over half of the nation's broiler production.

The fresh tomatoes in your salad most likely came from Florida or California, which, combined, produced more than two-thirds of U.S. tomatoes in 2002. The ketchup on your hamburger or hot dog probably came from California, which accounted for 95 percent of processed tomato production last year.

For dessert, six states — California, Florida, Texas, Georgia, Arizona, and Indiana — combined to produce about 80 percent of the nation's watermelons last year. *http://www.usda.gov/nass/*

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ◆TS◆

President's Message

In addition, we also talked about bringing in other entities like an employment service, to offer perspective. We also considered the point of view of independent contractors who might need project-to-project help.

Discussions like this generate good ideas. I hope those of you who attended the STC Conference made notes and contacts for new meeting topics. Since some of you asked for advanced policy and procedure topics, I hope you watched out for someone who would benefit your chapter colleagues. ◆TS◆

Calendar of Events

July 6   Los Angeles STC Chapter Lunchtime Forum, Embassy Suites Hotel, El Segundo

July 11   OCSTC Administrative Council Meeting, 6 p.m., Airport Executive Suites, Irvine

July 20   Inland Empire STC Chapter Meeting, Peking Chinese Restaurant, Riverside

July 24   Los Angeles STC Chapter Lunchtime Forum, Golden China Restaurant, Culver City

July 18   OCSTC Chapter Meeting, 6 p.m., Doubletree Club Hotel, Santa Ana

July Meeting Topic

How to Make a Six-Figure Income as a Technical Communicator

The world didn't end after the dot-com bust. The economy is finally picking up. And many companies are again making near-record profits. But are you getting near-record raises? Is the new wave of corporate income flowing down to you?

Come see returning speaker Jack Molisani's entertaining and informative presentation about how you can take control of your income and actually earn a six figure income as a technical communicator.

Do you want to increase your standard of living? Don't miss the July meeting!

About the Speaker

Jack Molisani has been a project officer in the Space Division of the United States Air Force, the documentation manager in a multi-million dollar software company, and currently is the founder and president of ProSpring Inc., a technical communication staffing firm: *www.prospring.net*

Jack is also producing LavaCon: The Fourth Annual Conference on Technical Communication Management to be held October 1 - 4, 2006 in Hawaii: *www.lavacon.org*

Jack will be raffling off a free admission to LavaCon at the meeting, so be sure to bring your business card for the drawing!

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