

Byline



Bi-Monthly Newsletter for STC Chicago Members

President's Thoughts

By Elizabeth L. Burke

If you would not be forgotten as soon as you are dead, either write something worth reading or do things worth writing.

Benjamin Franklin



Admittedly, technical communication can appear dry at times. Documenting an application to execute stock trades or calculate mortgage rates. Proce-

dures to sterilize medical equipment. Directions to assemble a BBQ grill. Exciting writing, maybe not, but think of the results. Those stock trades may lead to magical vacations for retirees. Mortgage rates delivering the first home for a couple. Lifesaving procedures performed using equipment that poses no health threat for the recipient. A family BBQ on one of summer's last weekends. Maybe not the most exciting writing but maybe magical results.

Additionally, we live at a time where our work is not restricted to the written page. Think of the posters encouraging young girls to explore STEM careers. Creating multi-media presentations that educate visitors at museums. Proposals resulting in spacecraft to discover what life exist beyond earth.

Just as Benjamin Franklin may not have conceived that his words would be quoted centuries later, imagine the possibilities of your work today.

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Associate Fellow Applications Are Due October 1

If you'd like to nominate a candidate or be considered for the honor of Associate Fellow, now is the time to begin the process. See <http://www.stc.org/membership/recognition/honors> for eligibility requirements and instructions. Ω

Find us online!



September Program

Seven Lessons I learned From Selling Ginsu Knives

Join us on September 29 as Jack Molisani gives us some valuable career lessons. Here's what he has to say about his topic:

In the mind 1990s I was laid off from my position as a Sales Engineer at a leading technology company. The U.S. economy was in recession and I spent months looking for a new engineering position, but no joy.

A friend who sells Ginsu knives in home and garden shows needed a temporary worker for the summer. She knew I was unemployed and offered me the position. I accepted, happy to have work—any work.

I ended up loving that summer job. Not only did I get to travel, I learned some life- and career-changing skills along the way. What started out as just a summer job turned into a major turning point in my career.

Do you want a new job, more money, a better standard of living?

Master these seven lessons I learned from selling Ginsu knives and watch your career soar!

Meeting details:

Thursday, September 29, 6:30p-9:00p (check-in opens at 6:00p)

Olive Garden restaurant, private room

1211 Butterfield Road

Downers Grove, IL 60515

Dinner and soft drink included

Registration link and full details will be posted on www.stc-chicago.com soon.

About our speaker:

Jack Molisani is the president of ProSpring Technical Staffing, an employment agency specializing in technical writers and other content professionals. He's the author of *Be The Captain of Your Career: A New Approach to Career Planning and Advancement*, which hit #5 on Amazon's Career and Resumé Best Seller list. Jack also produces the JavaCon Conference on Content Strategy and Tech Comm Management, which is in Las Vegas this October.

Register now! [Ω](#)



STC Chicago 2016 Technical Communication Competition Opens September 1

Each year, STC Chicago hosts a technical publications competition that is aligned in format and judging with the STC Summit Awards. The competition is an invaluable opportunity for technical communicators and their teams to...

- receive recognition for outstanding work effort
- receive detailed feedback from multiple peer reviews
- help provide visibility for our profession
- help establish professional standards for our work

Everyone is eligible to submit entries to our competition; you do not need to be a member of STC. You can enter work you completed or you can submit an entry on behalf of a colleague or subordinate. The entry must have been produced or substantially revised within the 24 months prior to September 1, 2016 and cannot have been submitted previously to any STC competition.

Submission deadline is October 28, 2016 (to take advantage of the Early Bird fee discount, you must submit your entries by September 28).

For full competition and submission details, see <http://www.stc-chicago.com/competition/call-for-entries/>. Submission and payment links will be posted online by September 1.

If you have any questions, please contact our Competition Committee via email at competition@stc-chicago.com. [Ω](#)

Call for 2016 Competition Judges

We are recruiting judges for the annual STC Chicago Technical Writing Competition. Judges have a unique opportunity to review entries from different categories and industries. Entries can be websites, manuals, help documentation, newsletters, etc. Past entries have come from industries as diverse as aerospace, manufacturing, agricultural, software, and medical associations. Reviewing such different work can be educational as well as inspiring. You also get to interact with other judges and benefit from their experience.

How does judging work?

Judges are placed in 3-member teams with a designated team lead. The team members receive 3-5 entries that must be reviewed over a 5-week period. Judging this year will run from November 5 through December 10. Each judge reviews the entries using a 4-page form that highlights different elements of technical communication. Responses are shared within the team and modified if necessary. Once the judging team agrees on an award level for an entry, the team lead communicates with the judging coordinator.

Where do I sign up?

Go to <http://www.stc-chicago.com/competition/judging-for-the-competition/> and apply (link will be posted by September 1). Ω



Remember When...

Creating documentation meant you wrote content with pen and paper and handed off to a secretary or printer for production.

Or, you used a manual typewriter to create documentation until the advent of an electric typewriter, Technology!.

Share your memories about the early days of Tech Comm. It may put a smile on your face or cause you to wonder how we managed without the technology of today! Ω

Chapter Program Schedule

Planning is currently underway for the monthly meetings for the remainder of the 2016 calendar year. Details and registration links will be posted in the chapter calendar and in the announcements on our website. In the meantime, here is a quick overview (subject to change).

We hope to see you at one or more of these meetings! Ω

Date	Topic / Speaker	Location
Sept. 29	"7 Career Lessons I Learned From Selling Ginsu Knives" Jack Molisani	Olive Garden Downers Grove
Oct. 1	Half-Day Career Development Workshop CARA recruiters	CARA offices Oakbrook
Oct. 20	TBD	Ram Restaurant Schaumburg
Nov. 17	"Preparing Clean, Translatable Content" Ralph Strozza, Interpro	Parthenon Chicago, Greek Town
Dec. 15	Holiday Party / Lightning Talks	TBD



Recruitment Contest

Don't you just love contests?

Well, we do, too! Therefore, the member who brings the most non-members (in total) to program meetings between September and December of 2016 will receive four free meetings! The winner will receive one free meeting per quarter for 2017 (excluding the annual awards banquet). The non-member guests will only be counted once per attendance and the prize is non-transferrable. Ω

Sparking the eLearning Conversation in Chicago

If you are an eLearning professional who lives in the Chicago area, odds are that you attended the Chicago eLearning & Technology Showcase (CETS) on August 16.

The Showcase has become a staple in the local elearning industry, celebrating its ninth anniversary in 2016. STC Chicago and its fellow host organizations — Chicago ISPI and ATDChi — collaborated once again to bring this popular conference to its members and to provide the greater community a place to network and celebrate Chicagoland as a world-class center for elearning.

This year, the event returned to the Naperville Campus of Northern Illinois University, where more than 350 attendees had access to a morning keynote and 33 speakers, with 18 breakout sessions in 5 different tracks.

What did we take away from this year's event? We've heard positive feedback about the venue, the creativity displayed by speakers, and the wide variety of topics covered. Featured throughout the day were discussions about intentional design, the power of games to improve performance, agile project management, adaptive learning principles, how to deliver bite-sized learning, and more.

Thanks to our video sponsor, we will have recordings of our keynote, as well as several breakout sessions, including "Learning Spark" presentations. A Learning Spark presentation consists of a speaker who gives a five-minute presentation using 20 automated slides that display for 15 seconds each. These popular talks aim to provide fast and fresh perspectives on learning and development.

At the end of the day, attendees participated in prize giveaways. Nicholas Strozza, Alan Albert, Annette Wizniewski, and Nancy Shanahan were the lucky winners who took home prizes courtesy of STC Chicago. Prizes included a copy of Snagit, a Kindle Fire, an STC Chicago gift basket, and a complimentary pass to a monthly chapter meeting.

We are grateful to our attendees, speakers, sponsors, and volunteers for making the 2016 Chicago eLearning & Technology Showcase a success. For session materials from 2016 and past events, see our SlideShare site. You can also view photos on our Flickr page and videos at our YouTube site.

The state of the local eLearning community is strong! If you didn't get a chance to attend the event this year, join us in August of 2017, when we will continue our cutting-edge exploration of new media and interactive elearning tools. Ω



President's Message

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Chapter Activities – Allow me to mention our Chapter activities, some new and some familiar, for the 2016-2017 year. Our AC members met this summer to create several new activity offerings for this year as well as re-fresh some of our ongoing favorite activities. Descriptions for the new items and updates to Chapter Favorites follow in this newsletter.

New

- New Member Recruitment Contest
- Volunteer Incentive Program
- 2016-2017 Monthly Programs
- Consulting Recruiters

Favorites

- Monthly Programs
- Fall Workshop – Career Development Workshop
- Technical Communication Competition
- Chapter Membership Renewal Discount



Please see the article [STC Chicago Needs VIPs](#).

I am adding more ideas to the VIP list and I am challenging each of you reading this newsletter to do something worth reading about.

Help shape your Chapter into an organization that supports your work and makes the Chapter even more interesting. And remember, for each item you contribute, you receive another ticket in the drawing for a dinner for two.

- Draw a comic commenting on our profession to include in our newsletter – keep it professional!
- Take a selfie of your technical communication team and write a short description of your team responsibilities to include in the newsletter

- If you're a lone writer, take a selfie with the group you support and make your team famous in our newsletter
- Write a slogan for our next meeting to encourage attendance
- Write a review about a book that helps you in your job
- Write an article describing your dream job in Technical Communication
- Tell us the best advice you ever received about being successful in Tech Comm
- Ask a question of an AC Officer or Committee Manager, we'll answer in a future issue
- Give us tips and tricks on the tools of your trade
- Recommend another item for this list of suggestions
- Attend a Thursdays @ STC Chicago lunch and network, please send an e-mail and copy the location organizer
- Create a small Tech Comm-related crossword puzzle to include in the newsletter
- Submit a Tech Comm-related trivia question
- Submit the best question you were asked during an interview
- Tell us the best compliment you received for your work

To accept this challenge, send me an e-mail, president@stc-chicago.com, with your ideas, suggestions, comments, and contributions. I will respond to your e-mail to let you know that I received it.

Take advantage, enjoy, contribute, get active, ask for help...get benefit from STC Chicago. Ω



Chicago Tribune Building

Career Development Workshop

Join us on Saturday, October 1, as CARA's professional recruiters help you prepare and practice for your next job search or your next job upgrade. In this hands-on workshop, you will learn how to create a more meaningful resume that shares your personal story and you will learn how to present an organized portfolio that properly showcases your craft. You will also learn the skills to be more prepared for an interview and will gain the ability to answer questions confidently.

This half-day workshop will begin with a networking breakfast and then will include the following facilitated topics:

- Make the "Write" First Impression (Facilitator: Kim Naftzger) Objective: Participants will be able to identify the ways in which they can organize their information and create a resume that best showcases their professional story.
- You are Your Portfolio (Facilitator: Sr. Consultant, Elizabeth Burke) Objective: Participants will be able to identify what work examples should be used to make a winning portfolio.
- Face It, Interviewing is a Skill (Facilitator: Lisa Vitale) Objective: Participants will be able to demonstrate how to prepare for an interview, present their professional story, and close the interview.
- Open Forum: Q/A and Session Wrap-Up (Facilitator: Gina Arinyanontakoon)
- Optional: Resume OR Portfolio Review (One-on-One Sessions with a CARA Recruiter or a Sr. Consultant)

The workshop will be held at the CARA offices in Oakbrook. Participants are encouraged to bring your resume and two or three work samples to evaluate how they present in today's market.

In order to help those who are currently unemployed or underemployed, this special career development workshop will have a nominal cost. Full details, facilitator bios, and registration information will be posted on our website in the next few weeks. Stay tuned! Ω



Chapter Membership Renewal Discount

Join STC or renew your membership and select STC Chicago as your community by December 31, 2016, and you will receive a 50% discount on all STC Chicago monthly programs during 2017. The discount also includes our annual Awards and Recognition Banquet in March. Wow...join a community of professionals in your chosen field of work AND receive a discount to develop new and enhanced knowledge and skills...now, that's a great deal! Ω

STC Chicago Needs VIPs

On August 15, we launched our new Volunteer Incentive Program (VIP). Beginning August 15, 2016, and going through June 1, 2017, every member that contributes to the chapter will be entered into a drawing for a gift card for dinner for two (restaurant details to be announced at a later date). Committee managers and all members (except officers) are eligible for the drawing. The winner will be drawn at the end-of-year celebration and business meeting in June, 2017.

Members get entered into the drawing once for each time they volunteer during the program year. Here are just some of the ways you can be entered into the raffle:

- write an article for Byline on a tech comm topic
- be a competition judge
- work check-in at a program meeting
- print name tags for a monthly meeting
- write a meeting recap for Byline
- make centerpieces for our annual banquet
- help contact schools regarding our scholarship program
- help plan a meeting (secure a venue, order food, etc.)
- ...and so much more!

You will get more ideas from our committee managers each month at our chapter meetings with our brief "Meet the Managers" segment during which they will introduce their committee and explain all the ways you can get involved.. Ω

STC Chicago Chapter Leaders | 2015-2016

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STC mission statement: Creating and supporting a forum for communities of practice in the profession of technical communication.

News guidelines: Send articles to byline@stc-chicago.com. Preferred format is a Microsoft® Word document file by email. We reserve the right to edit for style and space.

Advertising: We encourage advertising that follows STC guidelines and promotes services to STC Chicago members.

Half page (7.5"x4.5"): \$300 (1 issue)

Whole page (7.5"x9"): \$500 (1 issue)

Discounts for multiple issues

The advertisement and payment must be received by the 20th of the month before the next published issue of the newsletter. (Byline is published in February, April, June, August, October, and December.) We will not run your ad until payment is received. Submit ad files in electronic copy only in .tif, .gif, or .jpg format to byline@stc-chicago.com.

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Subscriptions: The current issue of Byline and all archived editions are available on the [STC Chicago website](http://stc-chicago.com).

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