

# Byline



Bi-Monthly Newsletter for STC Chicago Members and Supporters

Volume 62, Issue 1

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"The fact is that as writers we need to make our mark. It is that simple; it is that difficult."

— Suyog Ketkar, The Write Stride

## President's Message

by MaryKay Grueneberg

Hello STC Chicago and friends! I'm writing this the morning after our January meeting and I'm sitting here thinking about how lucky I am to be a part of STC Chicago. Unfortunately, many other STC communities are struggling to continue with in-person meetings but we are very fortunate to be able to continue to provide monthly meetings with great speakers on current and emergent topics in the field of technical communication.

Not only does this provide our membership and local technical communicators with great learning opportunities, but even more importantly, it offers all of us a great networking opportunity. I have always been a strong believer in networking and find that it is often just as beneficial as the topic presented. Check out our list of programs for the remainder of the 2018-19 program year and come out and join us one at one (or more) meetings for some food, some fun, a bit of education, and a lot of networking!

I hope to see you soon!☺

## Membership Drive Winners

Thank you to all who joined or renewed your STC membership and chose STC Chicago as your chapter! As you know, everyone joining or renewing prior to December 31 was entered into a drawing for two great prizes.

Through a random number generator, our two winners were selected. Please join us in congratulating our two winners: Paula Ludmann and Linda Ziemann.

Paula will receive a \$75 gift certificate for [thegrommet.com](http://thegrommet.com) and a TileSport Pro Series GPS item tracker.

Linda will receive a \$59 STC Webinar of her choice in 2019 and a Jot eWriter.

And, of course, they both will receive all of the benefits that STC Chicago has to offer. Congratulations to them both!☺



## Competition Wrapped

Our STC Chicago 2018 Technical Communications Competition has been wrapped. Thank you to all who submitted. Thank you, especially, to our judges who gave their time and talent over the past few months:

- Becky Altman
- Mollye Barrett
- Elizabeth Burke
- MK Grueneberg
- Sharon Harney
- Chris Kasic
- Sophia Marx
- Donna Roberts-Luttrell
- Bob Slocum
- Liz Stefanski
- Beth Wolfe
- Don Wuethrick
- Deborah Wuethrick

The competition awards will be presented at our annual Chapter Recognition and Awards Banquet in March. A full list of award winners will be included in our April issue of *Byline*. See the related article for registration information for the banquet.▣

## Design Contest Winner Selected

In November, STC Chicago sent out a call to all designers, graphic artists, and all-round creative people looking for a great new design for the cover of the STC Chicago 47th Annual Recognition & Awards Banquet program. All art types were welcomed, and we had just a few rules about content.

For the second year in a row, the winning entry was designed by Rachel Friend. Rachel is a recent graduate of McHenry County College with two Associate

of Arts and Sciences (AAS) degrees: Graphic Design and Web Design & Development. Rachel is a New Tech Comm Professional member of STC and a member of STC Chicago. Rachel is a talented designer.

No sneak previews of her design – if you want to see it, you'll have to join us at the banquet!▣

## Society News: 2019 Society Election to Open Soon

STC's 2019 Election Slate has been announced and elections will open soon.

President:

- Ben Woelk will automatically succeed from the office of Vice President

Vice President

- Craig Baehr
- Alan Porter

Treasurer

- Jim Bousquet

Director (two positions to be elected)

- Bethany Aguad
- Laura Palmer
- Kirk St. Amant

Nominating Committee (two positions to be elected)

- Sara Feldman
- Jack Molisani
- Li-At Rathbun
- Kelly Schrank

See <https://www.stc.org/wiki/elections> for each of the candidate's election pages.▣



“If you can't explain something simply, you don't understand it enough.”

— Albert Einstein

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# This is So Funny, You'll Literally Die Laughing

By John Stavrakos

Don't you get irked every time you hear someone misuse the word *literally*? Whether by sports announcers, political commentators, or entertainers, *literally* is increasingly being used incorrectly. In this era of constant media, there's no escaping the abuse. When improperly used so often, *literally* loses its punctuation value. What was once meant to accentuate a point now has no effect. And when something is true in the literal sense, we are left to wonder: Did *literally* mean literally? Or did it mean metaphorically or figuratively?

It's not that it gets misused in a general sense, people misuse it. The following is a list of speakers who knew better.

Who Said or Wrote It?: Sign and Drive for \$45 Commercial, January 11, 2018. This commercial assures us that any driver can get buy a car,

"Regardless of their past credit history."

*As opposed to their future credit history? Another victim of Redundancy Syndrome.*

Who Said or Wrote It?: Diana Morrison, September 13, 2017. Tommy, ESPN 30 for 30 documentary about boxer Tommy Morrison,

Asked if she knew her son had the virus, Mrs. Morrison said "He suspicioned it."

*His suspicions were justified.*

Who Said or Wrote It?: Connie Chung, September 4, 2017. Chandra Levy: Murder Mystery. Frustrated with trying to get Congressman Gary Condit to give a straight answer, Chung complained, "I was literally pulling teeth, I could not get him to open up."

*Maybe Chung should have sent in a dentist to conduct the interview.*

Who Said or Wrote It?: Sean Hannity, October 28, 2016. Railing against Hillary Clinton's behavior in office: "There's a word for that. It's called 'obstruction of justice.'"

*The English language is taking as big of a beating as our political system.*

Who Said or Wrote It?: Peter Roskam, November 23, 2015. AM 560 The Answer. Congressman Roskam criticized President Obama's military strategy by saying Obama: "precipitously pulled troops out of Iraq too quickly."

*Roskam is the latest victim of Redundancy Syndrome.*

Who Said or Wrote It?: Jill Duggar, October 19, 2015. TLC Channel. When asked how she reacted to finding out her brother's crimes, Jill Duggar said, "I cried nothing but tears."

*As opposed to what, microwave ovens?*

—  
Stavrakos is an independent editor in Chicago (<http://johnstavrakos.com>).<sup>α</sup>

## 47<sup>th</sup> Annual STC Chicago Recognition and Awards Banquet

We will hold our 47<sup>th</sup> annual banquet on Thursday, March 21, 2019. We will recognize the volunteers who have shared their talents and time with our chapter members, and we will present awards to those honored for their outstanding entries in the 2018 STC Chicago Technical Communications Competition.

The banquet will be held in the private back room of Jimmy's Charhouse in Elk Grove Village, just one mile off of Exit 4 of 290. Full details and a registration link will be posted on our Website soon. You don't need to be a member or a competition entrant to attend. Plan to join us for an evening of awards, recognition, networking, food, and fun!<sup>α</sup>

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## Society News: 2019 STC Summit

The 2019 STC Summit is in Denver this year, May 5-8, 2019.

The full schedule is available here: <https://summit.stc.org/schedule/>. You can view it in a PDF grid, or as a list. There are 80+ sessions and 12 workshops, plus:

- Opening Keynote by Peter Morville, information architecture expert and co-author of the O'Reilly "Polar Bear" books: <https://summit.stc.org/keynote-speaker/>
- Honors Event speaker Gabby Pascuzzi from Survivor: <https://summit.stc.org/honors-event-speaker/>
- Closing General Session speakers Karen Schriver, Saul Carliner, and Ginny Redish: <https://summit.stc.org/conference/plenary-session/>
- Certified Professional Technical Communicator (CPTC) Exam Prep Training
- An Expo Hall where you can meet with vendors and visit the Tech Comm Library
- Fun social events Monday and Tuesday evening, and Wednesday afternoon after the Closing General Session

Please consider attending the premier technical communication conference and share this info with your Tech Comm colleagues and social media.☞

## Upcoming STC Chicago Programs

Webinars:

**February 6:** "Customer Experience in a Culture of Assumption" with Alan J. Porter. Watch our website for details of the remaining monthly Webinars as they are posted.

Meetings:

**February:** There will be no in-person meeting in February.

**March 21:** Annual awards banquet (see related article).

**April 11 (Downers Grove):** "Tips and Tricks on Writing Clean and Clear" with Nick Strozza and Adriano Romano.

**April 18 (downtown):** "Intelligent Content – What is it?" with Alan Horvath.

**May 16:** "Using Design Thinking to Create Better Learning Experiences" with James Goldsmith and Daniel Coco.

**June 20:** Annual Business Meeting and Trivia Night.☞

## In Memoriam: Mike Starr

STC Chicago sadly notes the passing of Mike Starr at the age of 67. Mike died on December 19, 2018, outside his home in Pleasant Prairie, WI.

Mike was a long-time member of the technical communication profession and was a member of STC Chicago for many years, until he moved to Wisconsin. Once he moved to Wisconsin, Mike got involved with a local writers group, Working Writers of Wisconsin. Working Writers of Wisconsin is an association of full-time professional independent writers based in southeastern Wisconsin. They serve business clients, non-profit organizations, publishers and authors with a diverse mix of services. He was a member for seven years and was the group's president at the time of his death.

Mike was a writing consultant for a large part of his career. His business was WriteStarr Information Services, which he established as a sole proprietorship consulting business in 1999.☞

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## STC Chicago 2018-19 Officers

**President** – MaryKay Grueneberg, [president@stc-chicago.com](mailto:president@stc-chicago.com)

**Vice President** – Michael Burke, [vp@stc-chicago.com](mailto:vp@stc-chicago.com)

**Secretary** – Dan Dornbrook, [secretary@stc-chicago.com](mailto:secretary@stc-chicago.com)

**Treasurer** – Pete Wagner, [treasurer@stc-chicago.com](mailto:treasurer@stc-chicago.com)

**Immediate Past President** – Elizabeth Gecas, [ipp@stc-chicago.com](mailto:ipp@stc-chicago.com)

## Byline

Byline is a bi-monthly publication of the STC Chicago chapter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC), a non-profit membership organization serving the needs of technical communication professionals.

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

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**Subscriptions:** The current issue of Byline and all archived editions are available on the [STC Chicago Website](#).

## 2018-19 Committee Managers

**Alliance** – Linda Jansak

**Bylaws** – Becky Hall

**Competition** – Elizabeth Burke, [competition@stc-chicago.com](mailto:competition@stc-chicago.com)

**eLearning & Technology Showcase** – Linda Jansak

**Historian** – Bill Leavitt

**Byline Newsletter** – Robert Delwood, [byline@stc-chicago.com](mailto:byline@stc-chicago.com)

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**Get Real! Professional Interview Program** – Dan Dornbrook, [interview@stc-chicago.com](mailto:interview@stc-chicago.com)

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**Social Media** – Dan Dornbrook

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**Webinar Series** – Adam Evans

**Web/Online** – Linda Kelley, [web@stc-chicago.com](mailto:web@stc-chicago.com)



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