

# Byline



Bi-Monthly Newsletter for STC Chicago Members and Supporters

## President’s Message

By Pete Wagner

Looking back at my predecessor’s Byline message a year ago, we’ve certainly made great strides towards the return of at least a “new normal” in both our professional and personal lives. I’m looking forward to my new role as chapter president and to continue working with the great volunteers of the Administrative Council (AC).

With my second vaccine shot three months behind me, I finally went back to my downtown office in mid-July (the first time in 16 months), albeit only to pick up my personal belongings, as my company has given everyone the option of working from home full time going forward. While I love the energy of downtown (and will still occasionally grace the office there) I’m opting to permanently remove the three-hour daily travel time from this Grayslake boy’s schedule.

While things have been on the upswing this year, it still was too early for in-person conferences. So for the second year in a row, I attended the 2021 STC Summit from the comfort of my Grayslake office. Kudos to the Society for putting on what again was an outstanding event. My brain was certainly as packed with new information and trends as it would have been absorbing the information in person. In all honesty, I was physically more rested than when spending the day running from one session to another, checking out the exhibitor hall, networking in the hallways, running back to my hotel room...

One thing the pandemic has made loud and clear: we have the technology and the discipline to remotely attend conferences, work with our development teams, meet with our doctors, etc. as efficiently as we did in person. Still... one of my major drivers for being involved with STC at both the local and national levels is

the in-person networking that goes on at these events. My best learning and social experiences have resulted from face-to-face interactions. Until that time when Star Trek-like virtual reality technology (where you can’t tell if it’s live or if it’s Memorex) becomes available, I will always be hankering to personally attend events whenever schedule and budget permits.

If things continue trending positively, then the in-person campers will get their wish next year. Right now, STC Summit 2022 is scheduled to be held onsite again at Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Rosemont May 15-18. The Chicago Chapter has always extended a warm welcome to the technical communications community when it’s had the honor of hosting the national conference.

(Continued...)

### In this Issue

<b>President’s Message</b> .....	1
<b>The STC Summit – A view from a first-timer</b> .....	2
<b>STC Chicago Website Wins Apex Award</b> .....	2
<b>September: Structured Authoring Workshop</b> .....	3
<b>Thursday Virtual Meetup Schedule</b> .....	3
<b>Webinar Series Schedule</b> .....	3
<b>Leadership Opportunities</b> .....	3
<b>2021 Tech Comm Competition – Open Now</b> .....	4
<b>Call for Judges – We need YOU</b> .....	4
<b>STC Season of Learning</b> .....	5
<b>Featured Member Perk</b> .....	5
<b>STC Job Bank</b> .....	5
<b>Summit on Demand</b> .....	5

## President's Message, Continued...

With the caliber of members on the AC and in our chapter, as president I'm looking forward to once again rolling out the red carpet to our colleagues from across the country and the world.

May 2022 is still some time away. Soon the AC will be sending out a brief survey (one question really) to our membership: **what is your comfort level about attending in-person events again, such as our monthly chapter meetings?** The decision to begin offering attended events again will be purely driven by what you tell us. Please let us know through the survey or reach out to anyone on the AC with your thoughts. Email contacts for all officers and committee managers can always be found on the last page of *Byline* and on our website. Ω

## The STC Summit – A view from a first-timer

By Ben Durham, STC Chicago vice-president

In this past year, which has straddled a perceived temporal chasm between surprisingly brief and achingly long, I discovered a thriving network of passionate technical communicators overcoming the complications in the turbulent and confusing national and global atmospheres. I found that this organization, STC, was remarkably well-suited to the task of adapting and innovating to meet the challenges of remote work and long-distance collaboration. After all, finding the most effective means of communicating with our audiences is our primary goal.

This year's STC Summit was my first. In fact, as a career changer, this was my first professional conference outside of the domain of public education. Needless to say, the tone and content are more similar to that of the corporate world. The meetings were highly focused, with opportunities for networking, future learning, and exposure to new technology. While the direct social interaction wasn't there, I felt that I got the full effect of what the STC Summit has to offer.

Upon logging in, I recognized some familiar faces and names. By chance, one of the first sessions I attended was facilitated by Jack Molisani, executive director of LavaCon. I'm familiar with Mr. Molisani from

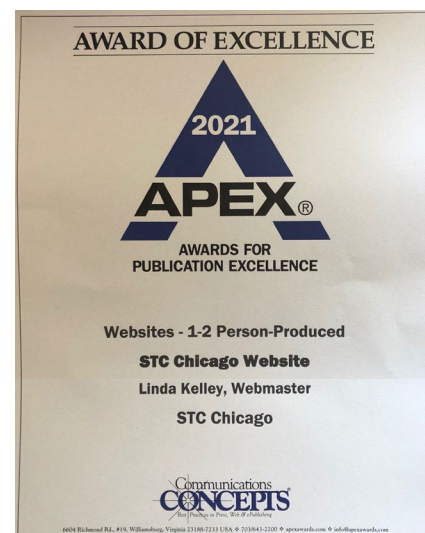
conferences hosted by Adobe as well as other STC events. He spoke about the power and challenges of networking in the age of COVID-19. I also met Ayushi Jaiswal from Whatfix, a summit sponsor. She talked about how learning management software and how conforming to SCORM standards, a set of standards for eLearning platforms, is essential and indispensable right now. As a former educator, I found her message particularly timely and relevant.

Next year, with the health and safety of our members allowing, STC Summit 2022 will return to an on-site and in-person forum at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare, May 15-18. I look forward to my first year as vice president of the Chicago Chapter and the rewarding opportunity our city has to host the STC Summit once again. Ω

## STC Chicago Website Wins Apex Award

We are very excited to announce that we have received an Apex Award for Publication Excellence for our website! In the past we have received recognition for our newsletter in this prestigious competition, but this is the first time we have earned an award for our website, thanks mostly to the hard work of our webmaster **Linda Kelley**.

Our *Award for Publication Excellence* was given in the category of "Websites – 1-2 Person-Produced".



The 33<sup>rd</sup> annual competition was sponsored by the editors of *Writer's Web Watch*, published by Communication Concepts, Inc. Ω

## Virtual Chapter Meeting

### September: Structured Authoring Workshop

Registration is now open for the September workshop. This online workshop gives a basic overview of structured authoring and its principles, regardless of the software/component content management system (CCMS) used. The principles discussed in the overview are then illustrated with real life examples.

The workshop will take place September 22, 5:30p to 7:30p CDT. The class will be taught by STC Chicago president Pete Wagner, who was the CCMS Power User at Siemens in Buffalo Grove for many years, and later worked as a consultant at Dakota Systems Inc., a Chicago company that helps organizations implement structured authoring, content management and publishing solutions.

Questions regarding this topic can be submitted in advance of the workshop by email to: [president@stc-chicago.com](mailto:president@stc-chicago.com)

For the registration link, see the Structured Authoring Workshop [website page](#). Ω

### Thursday Virtual Meetup Schedule

The meetups for the remainder of 2021:

- August 12
- September 9
- October 14
- November 11

*No December Meetup*

Check out our [Thursday Meetups](#) page for the registration link (it's free, of course, but you need to register to receive the GoTo Meeting link for the current month). Ω



### Wednesday Webinar Series

#### Webinar Series Schedule

August – No Webinar

Sept 1 – topic tbd, watch our website and your inbox

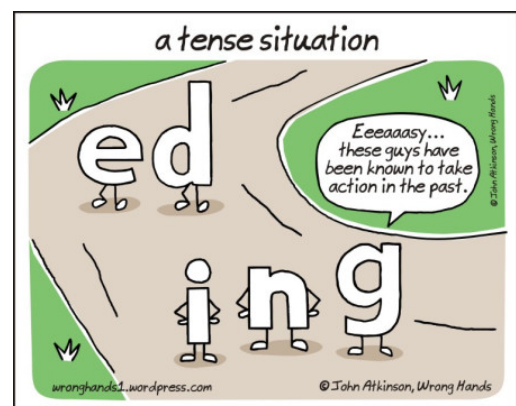
Do have an idea for a webinar or a chapter meeting? Would you like to present at one of our monthly virtual events? Just reach out to us at [program@stc-chicago.com](mailto:program@stc-chicago.com) or [webinars@stc-chicago.com](mailto:webinars@stc-chicago.com) – we'd love to hear from you! Ω

#### Leadership Opportunities

Do you have some fresh ideas for STC Chicago? Are you looking for leadership opportunities? Would you like to make a difference in the Chicagoland Technical Communication community?

If you say “yes” to any of these things, then we need you in STC Chicago. We are an organization led by volunteers. Whether you have a little time or a lot of time, please reach out to the STC Chicago president ([president@stc-chicago.com](mailto:president@stc-chicago.com)) or any of our office (see the full list of officers on the last page of this newsletter) and we can find the perfect place for you.

Please check out our [Committees List](#) on our website and see where you might be a good fit. Ω



## 2021 Tech Comm Competition – Open Now

We're excited to get started on this year's **STC Chicago Technical Communication Competition**. We're looking for a lot of diverse entries this year; will yours be one of them?

Although the name is "competition," each entry is evaluated on its own merit and evaluated against industry standards and not judged against other entries. This is an opportunity to have other professional technical communicators evaluate your work and provide feedback. Receiving feedback is an important tool for any technical communicator at any level in their career. Receiving recognition for your work is even better and always goes a long way in proving to the management teams the importance of what you do.

### Why enter the competition?

- Provide visibility for our profession
- Get recognized for your outstanding efforts
- Have your work reviewed by your peers against industry standards

Now is the time to look at the work you've produced over the past 24 months and decide what you are going to enter into the 2021 STC Chicago Technical Communication Competition. The categories for entries are:

- Training Materials
- Informational Materials
- Promotional Materials
- User Support Materials

### What does it cost to enter?

The competition entry fees are listed below and must be made online (companies submitting multiple entries can contact us to make arrangements to pay by check, if required).

\$50 - STC Chicago members  
 \$75 - Other STC members  
 \$100 - Non-STC members  
 \$25 - Full-time students

### Who can enter?

Everyone, member of STC or not, is eligible to submit entries to our competition. You can enter work you completed, or you can submit an entry on behalf of a colleague or subordinate (with their permission). International entries are welcome, if they are in English.

### When are submissions due?

STC Chicago is accepting entries now through October 1, 2021. To submit, go to the [Call for Entries](#) page online for the entry form, details, and payment link. Ω



## Call for Judges – We need YOU

What good is a competition without judges? We need YOU! No judging experience necessary, but we do require experience in the technical communication field. We will teach you the rest!

Judges' orientation is planned for October 9 and will be virtual. Currently, we are planning to be finished with judging duties by the end of November, but that is dependent on the total number of entries and the number of judging teams.

If you are an experienced technical communicator, please consider sharing your talent with your peers. The time commitment is approximately 1.5-2.5 hours per week for 4-6 weeks. Please see the [Call for Judges](#) page on our website for more details. Ω

# Society News



## STC Season of Learning

In July, STC launched a brand-new limited time education benefit exclusively for STC members: the STC Season of Learning. Each month from July through September, STC members will have FREE access to a series of themed educational recording. Ω



## Featured Member Perk

As an STC member, you can **save up to 70%** on any online published travel rates at over 800,000 hotels and resorts around the world. In addition to hotels, you can also book discounted flights, vacation rentals, cars, and entertainment tickets.

Visit the [Member Perks page](#) and log into your STC account for more information about Booking Community.com and our other affinity partners. Ω

## STC Job Bank

STC provides members with a robust [Job Bank](#) where you can search for career opportunities with leading organizations from around the world. Post a resume, search the job listings, or create a personal job alert to let you know when jobs you want are available. This service is free to members and sponsored by [Writing Assistance, Inc.](#)

Recently posted jobs include Requirements Analyst, Marketing/Technical Writer, and St. Technical Communications Specialist. Ω

## Summit on Demand



If you missed the opportunity to attend STC's 2021 Summit, the **Summit OnDemand** registration is now open. Purchase Summit OnDemand today to receive access to recordings of dozens of educational sessions, the virtual exhibitors, and more through **31 August**. Ω

## STC Chicago 2021-22 Officers

**President** – Pete Wagner, [president@stc-chicago.com](mailto:president@stc-chicago.com)  
**Vice President** – Ben Durham, [vp@stc-chicago.com](mailto:vp@stc-chicago.com)  
**Secretary** – Dan Dornbrook, [secretary@stc-chicago.com](mailto:secretary@stc-chicago.com)  
**Treasurer** – Francis Bao, [treasurer@stc-chicago.com](mailto:treasurer@stc-chicago.com)  
**Immediate Past President** – Rita Hovorka, [ipp@stc-chicago.com](mailto:ipp@stc-chicago.com)

## 2020-21 Committee Managers

**Alliance** – Linda Jansak  
**Bylaws** – Becky Hall  
**Competition** – MK Grueneberg and Nancy Shanahan, [competition@stc-chicago.com](mailto:competition@stc-chicago.com)  
**eLearning & Technology Showcase** – Linda Jansak  
**Historian** – Bill Leavitt  
**Byline Newsletter** – MK Grueneberg, [byline@stc-chicago.com](mailto:byline@stc-chicago.com)  
**Nominating** – Manager Ben Durham, [nominating@stc-chicago.com](mailto:nominating@stc-chicago.com)  
**Get Real! Professional Interview Program** – \*2021-22 manager wanted\*, [interview@stc-chicago.com](mailto:interview@stc-chicago.com)  
**Membership Drive** – \*2021-22 manager wanted\*, [membership@stc-chicago.com](mailto:membership@stc-chicago.com)  
**Programs** – Dan Dornbrook, [program@stc-chicago.com](mailto:program@stc-chicago.com)  
**Social Media** – Dan Dornbrook  
**Scholarships** – \*2021-22 manager wanted\*, Pete Wagner, [scholarships@stc-chicago.com](mailto:scholarships@stc-chicago.com)  
**Sponsorship** – \*2021-22 manager wanted\*, MK Grueneberg, [sponsorship@stc-chicago.com](mailto:sponsorship@stc-chicago.com)  
**Webinar Series** – MK Grueneberg, [webinars@stc-chicago.com](mailto:webinars@stc-chicago.com)  
**Web/Online** – Linda Kelley, [web@stc-chicago.com](mailto:web@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 at: <http://www.stc-chicago.com>



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