

Hardcopy Publications Competition Winners

*by Kathleen Atwater, Technical Publications
 Competition Chair. You can reach her at
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The March 12, STC Carolina Chapter meeting celebrated the completion of the 1997 STC Technical Publications competition. The awards dinner, hosted at Nortel's RTP facility, announced 21 winning entries for the STC Carolina Chapter, including three Distinguished awards. One of the Distinguished awards won the Best of Show award. The three Distinguished entries have been forwarded to the STC International Competition.

Achievement winners included:

- Lynn Remaklus and William Clay Eaton, Wandel & Goltermann, Inc., for "WG ATM Analysis Application User's Guide" (Software User Guides).
- Larry Kunz, Helen Burton, Kathleen O'Toole, and Maxine Boyd, IBM Corporation, for "Introducing IBM eNetwork Software" (Promotional Brochures).
- Mike Kleppinger, Deborah Walker, and Susan Szews, Bell & Howell Mail Processing Systems, for "Accumulator/Folder/Collector Service Manual" (Hardware Installation/Reference/Repair Guides).
- Mike Kleppinger, James Handy, Rick Edinger, and Fred Perry, Bell & Howell Mail Processing Systems, for "Accumulator, Folder, Collector Parts Catalog" (Hardware Installation/Reference/Repair Guides).
- Douglas Holzworth, Sheila Loring, Dawn Jernigan, and Gregory Rakauskas, HealthPoint, for "System Administration Tools User Guide" (Software User Guides).
- Christine Brooks Thompson, Kimberly Harris, and Elma Longley, First Citizens Bank, for "Credit Update Newsletter First Citizens Bank" (Newsletters).
- Christine Brooks Thompson and Pamela S. Croom, First Citizens Bank, for "Online Credit Manual Quick Reference-First Citizens Bank" (Quick Reference Guides).
- Jeri Gray, Water Resources Research Institute of the University of North Carolina, for "Water Resources Research Institute News" (Newsletters).

- Kathy Underwood, OIT Publications & Training, Duke University, for "Office of Information Technology Annual Report 1995-1996" (Annual Reports).
- Kathy Underwood and Rani Gill, OIT Publications & Training, Duke University, "Glove Box News" (Newsletters).

Merit winners included:

- Lisa Pappas, Christopher Benz, and Newsletter Contributors, Mobius Group, Inc, for "Mobius Strip" (Newsletters).
- Judith Powers, Nortel, for "Nortel's AccessNode System," and "Cox Steps Up to the Plate with Telephony" (Trade/News Articles).
- Judith Powers, Nortel, for "Nortel S/DMS TransportNode" and "PalmettoNet is Flying High So Customers Can Travel First Class" (Trade/News Articles).
- Douglas Holzworth, Tammy L. Carter, Sheila Loring, and Dawn Jernigan, HealthPoint, for "StatPoint User Guide" (Quick Reference Guide).
- Laura White and Rani Gill, OIT Publications & Training, Duke University, for "Duke's Internet Survival Guide" (Software Combination User/Reference Guides).

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The Carolina Chapter publishes the *Carolina Communiqué* monthly to provide reliable and timely information to chapter and society members.

We encourage other STC chapters to reprint material from this publication. Please credit us and send us a copy of the reprint.

We also invite our readers to submit material for consideration in the *Carolina Communiqué*. E-mail articles and letters to tigger@vnet.net or send snailmail to:

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Submission Deadlines

Articles are due on the first day of every month. For example, articles submitted by November 1st are considered for the December issue or later issues. Exceptions can be made for extremely timely information.

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Her Nichols Worth

It must have been something I said. Or, perhaps it was something that Mike or Ceil said in their articles about being active and getting involved in the chapter.

The newsletter staff has grown considerably in the last couple of months. Many people have volunteered to do many little different things, and we are scrambling to try and take advantage of all the offers to help! And (drum roll please), we have a volunteer to take over as Newsletter Editor: Jean Adam! He's got the bug, that's for sure. As Jean sat and helped us fold, staple, label, and stamp the newsletters last month, he started editing the articles, thinking how to redesign the pages, and wondering how to get regular columns appearing each month.

I know that as I hand over the reins to Jean that he will take the newsletter to even greater heights than I ever imagined.

Can't Reach Technical Support?

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*by Melissa Brown, Washington DC Chapter,
from "Capital Letter", Volume 28, Number 5,
February 1997.*

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"Our phone queue is full. Please try again later." How many of us have heard this message in the midst of a software crisis? Unfortunately, getting through to a live person can be a challenge these days. Assuming that you have already consulted the manual, online help, and release notes like a good technical communicator, following are some alternatives to that ever-busy technical support phone line.

Communicate with Technical Support in Other Ways

No, we're not talking about smoke signals, but other electronic forms of communication: fax, e-mail, the bulletin board system (BBS). Most self-respecting software companies have at least a technical support fax number, and many have added e-mail capability. For example, Blue Sky Software has taken e-mail to a new level by promoting a new automated e-mail response system, which provides questions to frequently asked questions about its help authoring software, RoboHelp.

The electronic bulletin board is often overlooked as a means of getting information; all it requires is a modem, and it's free (phone charges apply, of course). On a BBS, you can read company bulletins, download and upload files, or send messages to technical support, depending on the BBS. Examples of files you can download are bug fixes, software upgrades, and documents with tips and tricks. In addition, technical support might recommend that you upload your program files to the BBS, so that they can take a look at them.

See "Technical Support" on page 5

OOPS, or object-oriented programming-madness imaginings

.....
A poem by Kathryn Lynn Turk (Copyright 1994). You can reach her at SunKat@prodigy.net.

Editor's Note: The June program for the Carolina Chapter will be an "Open Mike Night" at an art gallery in Raleigh. Please bring your poems, short stories, and other creative writing to share with your colleagues.

I've included this "technical poem" as an inspiration.
.....

i've been told that
my data types are primitive
& my.member_functions are complex.
to declare all these statements
may require <a bunch of args>

look through this scope
to see static characters
strings of them spawn
across inline defaults

can i express my value
if i ignore the parameter
(or is that the compiler's job?)
am i simply enumerating
globally i vary
#include <whatever i must>
maybe i owe stream

my data's all public
strewn all over this union.
as i build this absurd structure
i wonder:
do i really want to expose
such constructs as those?
i must hide my data
there--now it's private
unless i protect it
(through inheritance)
[array of sunshine]
<<overloads the operator
& defines the structure{of my block life};
the complex constructor takes two doubles
& doubles as a member function

worse yet i'm told that
friendship violates all O!O! concepts
it exposes all members
allowing access to all those within a single class
a class may also grant friendship to nonmembers]
(no need to grant friendship to anything? anyone?
that's already a member])
this sounds like socioprogramming snobbery to me]

IF a class is constructed in the woods
& THEN its destructor is called,
does anyone hear its storage being dynamically allocated?
ELSE does it even exist?

if i give you my *address
can you call, do, or find me?
(overloaded operators are standing by])
without a proper &reference
no doubt you'll return a "HELPLOST" error

i assign & i shift
& give a little BIT
but the literal definition
escapes my sense of logic
my selector has escaped]

how easily i link all of this]
but--what IS this <mess>??
these objects have methods
my madness can't fathom
debug them, i must]

i point to the object
the arrow operator->groans
& none of this small talk
will let my methods go]

the source of the code in my node
is not in my head or files
but in the THIS hidden
i call-return my SELF

is any of this logical XOR
have i been deallocated?
my implicit value stored
somewhere in this foreign tongue
what is the lowest common denominator

IF
IMyself::amTheDefault{...};
THEN
it's I (not myProgram) that runs...
so i must be executed]

Grandmother: Tell Us Your Story

.....
by Ann-Marie Grissino, Principal of Keypoint
Consultants, a documentation and media design firm.
Ann-Marie can be reached at
keypoint@mindspring.com.
.....

“Our privacy has been invaded.”

Have you had to turn off your child’s computer because you saw Internet illustrations that you don’t want your child to see? Have you had to talk to your children about Internet pornography? Have you heard news about how strangers are entering your homes and meeting your family members? How do you cope with this invasion of your privacy?

Ask your grandmother (or great-grandmother). She knows what to do.

“We all seem to huddle around it and want more.”

How many hours are you accessing the Web? People talk about Internet addictions; are *you* addicted to needing more information? What can or should you do?

Ask your grandmother. She knows.

“I want to know what’s going on right now.”

If you didn’t log onto the Internet for two weeks, would you feel out of it? Do you want to find out the latest and don’t want to wait until even the next newscast?

Communication streams at you faster and faster. You still want more. Is this healthy?

Ask your grandmother.

“The Internet is good for society.”

You can get information from around the globe so easily and much more quickly than you could without the Internet. The Internet is good for society, good for the nation . . . well, that’s what people say.

Ask your grandmother what she did to handle information explosion.

Your Grandmother Knows

You see, your grandmother went through this—all of it—with the invasion of radio communication (or television) into her home. She went through the same problems you’re facing today: invasion of privacy, information explosion, and the inability to control what was coming out of the box.

The medium is different, but the issues are the same. Think about it.

See “Grandmother” on page 7

Membership News

Total STC membership: 22700

Current chapter membership: 419

New members:

Maureen Avakian, Cheryl Conrad, Wayne DeBerry, Christy Gharbo, Page Hankin, Ann Norcross, Danae Ryan, Karen Servance, Ronald Statt, Angela Switzer, Betsy Walters

Transfers in:

Christine Barnes-Poole, Kelly Mullins, William Vaughan, Cheryl Wells

Transfers out:

None

Members reinstated:

Kathleen Atwater, Ernest Oliver

Members with undeliverable addresses:

Jeffrey B. Miller

Job Bank Information

The number of jobs available for weekly posting on the telephone messaging service (a.k.a., the Job Bank phone line) exceeded the recording capacity, forcing us to rely on our Web pages. The Web has no such limits and serves our members better—offering more jobs, timely updates, and greater detail about each job listing.

You can reach the Web page at:

http://stc.org/region2/ncc/www/cc_joblisting.html.

If you do not have Web access, you can request to have a hard copy sent to you by U.S. mail. We on the Job Bank hope you find this arrangement satisfactory and invite your comments or suggestions.

Send requests or comments to NCSTCJobs@aol.com, or call (919) 406-6600.

For comments about the Job Bank Web pages:

- Gina Caldanaro, Co-chair (ginacal@vnet.ibm.com)
- Dick Evans, Co-chair (infodex@mindspring.com)
- Lee Bumgarner (jobumg@unx.sas.com)
- Terry Otto (tnotto@mindspring.com)

“Technical Support” from page 2

Go to the Company's Web site

The World Wide Web (WWW) has become an invaluable resource in the world of fast-paced software development. A Web site usually offers late-breaking product information, software upgrades, bug fixes and workarounds, and the opportunity to send e-mail to technical support.

If this sounds similar to what's contained on a BBS, it is. But, the Web offers two distinct advantages: it is usually updated more frequently, and can contain links to related sites. Very often, a company will augment its Web site with links to other industry Web sites, which can help you locate the information you need. For example, Virtual Media Technology's site contains a link to the site of a user group for its software product, and WexTech Systems' site has a section called "Community" that contains links to the sites third-party experts that use their product.

Refer to E-mail Discussion Lists and Internet News Groups

E-mail discussion lists and Internet newsgroups exist for most major Windows and Macintosh software products; for example, FrameMaker, Adobe Acrobat, and Microsoft Word.

In addition, a lot of lists and groups are concerned with overall industry issues, such as product usability, language and translation, and technical writing.

Discussion lists and newsgroups are updated daily with messages from subscribers across the country. If you are having a problem, chances are another user on the list or group had the same problem. E-mail discussion lists frequently have subscribers who answer your question immediately, with 24-hour turnaround. In addition, some larger discussion lists have searchable archives, so you can search on a keyword and view related messages that have been posted in the last week, month, or even year.

Consult Colleagues

Ask your office-mate. Call the friend who attended that training class with you. Send an e-mail to the person you chatted with at a local conference. Search your Rolodex.

Finally, get to know more users by joining a special interest group (SIG) or a local user group. STC sponsors SIGs on such subjects as multimedia, online information, and scientific communication. In addition, many product-specific and industry-specific user groups exist in the area.



“Winners” from page 1

Excellence winners included:

- Lynn Remaklus, Lisa Carter, and Lisa Stewart, Wandel & Goltermann, Inc., for “WG RTBench Suite User’s Guide” (Hardware/Software Combination Guides).
- Larry Kunz (IBM Corporation), Doug Wesolek (The TDA Group), Sarah West (The TDA Group), for “IBM eNetwork Connection” Newsletters).
- Kathy Underwood, OIT Publications & Training, Duke University, for “OIT Brochure: Telephone, Paging, & Cable Television Services” (Informational Brochures).

Distinguished winners included:

- Thomas W. Knecht, Karl E. Larson, and Nikola Dudley, NC State University, Dept. of Agricultural Communications, for “The Mid-Atlantic Winegrape Grower’s Guide” (Books).
- Rani Gill and Laura White, OIT Publications & Training, Duke University, for “SWAT Poster” (Informational Brochures).

The Distinguished and Best-of-show winner was:

- Sylvana Smith and Pat Motsavage, Nortel, for “Nortel Directory and Operator Services Overview” (Promotional Brochures).

This year the Carolina Chapter’s STC Technical Competition was managed by Nortel. The Carolina Chapter entries were swapped with the STC Philadelphia Chapter for the judging. Twenty-four entries were received from the Philadelphia. The following individuals provided their time to provide detailed review, feedback, and recommendations for awards on each of the entries:

- Kathleen Atwater, Chairman (Nortel)
- Bill Albing (Fujitsu)
- Derek Cadzow (Nortel)
- Venn Carver (Nortel)
- Susan Davis, (Nortel)
- Ken House (SAS)
- David Moody (Nortel)
- Eleanor Moore (Nortel)
- Sylvana Smith (Gray Pony Communications)
- Michael Uhl (Lockheed Martin)

The time spent in judging is a refresher class for all the judges on the key attributes that make each category of technical communication effective. It is recommended that all members consider volunteering for participation as a judge in the 1998 competition next fall. This provides an excellent opportunity for an intense education on good technical communication skills and understanding what their peers and competition are providing in the marketplace.



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"Grandmother" from page 4

Radio communication changed how people got their information. All of a sudden, people obtained the news right in their own homes and much more quickly. They got more types of information more often. The only way to control what was coming out of that box was to turn it off. And, people huddled around radios.

All of a sudden, your grandmother had strangers talking inside her house, espousing a new product or a new idea. She didn't know what they might say next. Did she want these strangers promoting their values on her family?

History has a strange way of repeating itself and we're coming around the circle again. Look around you.

Talk to your grandmother.



Monthly Meeting Notice

What: STC International Presenters

Get a chance to hear the presentations our own chapter members will give at the next STC International Conference!

When: Thursday, April 8, 6:00–8:00 PM

Where: RTI Dryfuss Auditorium



Special Interest Groups

Several special interest groups (SIGs) are becoming active in the Carolina Chapter. Here is some contact information for three of the most active ones:

- Medical, Pharmaceutical, Environmental, and General Science Writers SIG. Contact Tom Burns (365-6935) or Terry Otto (992-0181).
- Managers SIG. Contact Steve Pope (851-4064).
- Online Information SIG. Contact Ann-Marie Grissino (562-2464).



Education and Training Events

The Education and Training Committee, led by Dick Evans (who can be contacted at 781-4302) and supported by many, has the following seminars or workshops available in the coming months:

- Two-day FrameMaker Training by Scriptorium Publishing, Inc., taught by Sarah O’Keefe, on April 6 and April 7. Cost is \$590 for STC Carolina Chapter members, \$675 for non-members. For more information, contact Sarah O’Keefe at 919-775-7147.
- Three-day, Adobe-certified Basic FrameMaker Training offered by Mallett Technology, on April 4, 18, and 25. Cost is \$450 for STC Carolina Chapter members. Contact Kay Ethier at 406-1500, ext. 22.

The Education and Training Committee meets on the Tuesday after the regular Carolina Chapter meeting (the second Thursday of every month) from 6:00 P.M. to 7:30 P.M. at restaurants near RTP. See the Chapter’s Web site or call Dick Evans for the location of the next meeting.



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