

carolina

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Treasurer's Message

Modest fees will rebuild reserves

Contributed by Michael Harvey, Carolina Chapter Treasurer

I've been privileged to serve as Treasurer of the STC Carolina Chapter for nearly sixteen months. During that time, I have come to truly appreciate the wide range of services that our chapter offers its members and other local professionals. For the dollars that our chapter invests, we create enormous value for technical communicators in our area.

When I became Treasurer on July 1, 1999, we had over \$24,000 in the bank. The 1999 Summer Conference, held later that month, made a modest profit. That year, the chapter's leadership embarked on a program to use our cash resources for the betterment of our membership, emphasizing the value of the services offered over the expense of providing them.

Expanded services prove costly

The expanded range of services provided by our chapter proved costly.

The 2000 Summer Conference spent nearly \$10,000 more than it took in. This cost overrun had an unintended ripple effect. If we keep to our chapter's approved 2000 budget, spending over \$45,000 on programs for you and other professional communicators, we will end the fiscal year with a little over \$6,000 in the bank. That's a big drop from a cash reserve of \$24,000.

For non-profit organizations like STC, the IRS generally accepts, without question, a reserve of two to three times annual operating expenses. Generally, STC chapters keep about 75% of their annual expenses in the bank. Our annual expenses in 1998 were about \$19,000; in 1999, they were about \$24,000. You can do the arithmetic. Our planned 2000 expenses are over \$45,000. So for 2001, we are probably going to end up with only 13% of our annual expenses in the bank. This smaller cash reserve will constrain our ability to offer services in 2001 and beyond.

Nominal fees needed to keep budget balanced

For that reason, we are charging nominal fees for activities that had, in the past, been free to members. So when you are digging in your pocket for \$5 for a chapter-sponsored event, please remember, we're not charging just to make money. We're charging to keep our budget balanced, and to begin rebuilding our cash reserve for future programs.

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Carolina Chapter Leaders

President

Emily Toone
(460-9644)

Vice President

Kay Ethier
(547-0129)

Treasurer

Michael Harvey
(248-6059)

Secretary

Cindy Richardson Decker
(786-4342)

Programs Co-Managers

Alice Man
(303-5752)
and

Amanda Worthington
(392-3366)

Membership Manager

Catherine Goodfellow
(460-9644)

Communications Manager

Doug Holzworth
(465-2331)

Immediate Past President

Michelle Corbin
(254-1960)

Employment Manager

Viola Suddaby
(467-8635)

Training Manager

Frances Wirth

Summer Conference 2001 Manager

Annie Janis
(981-0972 ext. 26)

Related Organizations Liaison

Bill Albing

A listing of other committee managers, with their contact information, is on the Carolina Chapter's Web site at www.stc-carolina.org.

Director-Sponsor's Message

Fall Board of Directors meeting

Contributed by **Thea Teich**, Region 4 Director-Sponsor, with minor edits by **Chris Benz**, Region 2 Director-Sponsor

The STC Board of Directors met in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, September 14–17 and covered a great deal of ground. Highlights are reported briefly here.

Committee and program updates

- The board authorized the STC office to conduct a membership drive using the services of a professional marketing company.
- STC will become an affiliate member of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). The annual fee for this is \$5,000. W3C determines standards for Web-based communication, among other wide-ranging concerns of specific interest to STC.
- The Instructional Design & Learning SIG was approved with an initial budget of \$1,900.
- The Conference registration fee for members for the 48th STC Annual Conference in Chicago in 2001 will be \$420. The discounted rate for speakers will remain \$350.

Budget

The board approved a budget for Fiscal Year 2001 of \$4,725,250 in income, \$4,711,849 in expenses, and \$13,401 in net surplus.

Chapters and membership outside of the United States

Refer to the STC Web site.

Branding and corporate identity

The board approved a new logo and stationery program for the Society. Before the end of the year, chapter presidents will receive specific and detailed corporate identity information; in other words, how to use the new logo and various design elements in chapter stationery, hardcopy, and electronic materials.

Past President **Mary Wise** announced the new STC mission statement, *Designing the Future of Technical Communication*, at Leadership Day at the Orlando conference. Another external brand tool is the organization's "story," a brief explanation of what the organization stands for, who its members are, and how it views its future. The STC board approved the STC story—the consistent "face" we present to the rest of the world. (Refer to Web site for the STC Story.)

Web site hosting for chapters

For the past several years, the board has been dealing with a number of difficult issues related to decentralized versus centralized hosting of chapter Web sites. Recent problems and service difficulties that have occurred as stc.org's bandwidth needs have exceeded what our current ISP can provide make this issue urgent as well as extremely important.

Over the next few months, committees in the Communications area, managed by the Assistant to the President for Communications **Lory Hawkes**, will be developing and implementing a transition plan that will enable chapters to select their own ISPs and maintain their own Web sites in a decentralized system.

If you have questions or comments, please contact Chris Benz at Chris.Benz@e-pubcorp.com or at (919) 226-0060 (day) or (919) 479-4891 (evening) or refer to the STC Web site for details.

New SIG Invites Independents to Get Listed

Skills matrix for independents

Contributed by **Cheri Taylor**, Carolina CIC SIG Manager

The Carolina Consulting and Independent Contracting Special Interest Group (CIC SIG) is now listing many of its members in a new online Directory of Independent Technical Communicators at www.stc-carolina.org/cicdir/.

If you are interested in hiring an independent communicator, check out the site! A skills matrix gives you a brief overview of service categories and an alphabetical list of members. You can also search on various keywords for services, industries, tools, and other categories. A FAQ section provides more information about hiring and working effectively with an independent. You can select one or more members to contact, or send an e-mail to all of them at once.

If you are an independent communicator in the Research Triangle Park area, get listed! A link on the site leads you to a short application that asks for your skills and contact information. Your listing can link to your own Web site or e-mail address if you like. And there is a list of useful resources for independents.

The Carolina CIC SIG officially formed in January 2000. We discuss topics of interest to consultants and independent contractors at our monthly meetings, host a newsgroup for members, and maintain a Web site. You can check the site at www.stc-carolina.org/www/PICs/cic/ for the next meeting topic, how to join the newsgroup, interesting resources, and more.

Upcoming workshops

Saturday, November 11, 2000

Double-Feature Skills Workshop:

Morning session: Effective meeting skills

Afternoon session: Creative problem-solving skills

Presenter: Lynn Ann Bartholomew of Learning Lab Associates, Dallas

Time: 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Place: PPI, 2950 Gateway Centre Blvd., Morrisville

Cost: \$75 for full day, including both sessions, lunch, and workbooks
\$40 per individual session

Contact: To register, contact **Cheri Taylor** at 859-1467 or techwords@pobox.com.

Lynn Ann is a dynamic trainer who will quickly have you practicing your new meeting and problem-solving skills.

Sign up for both workshops, or for a single session.

Saturday, December 9, 2000

FrameMaker Quick-Start

Intensive, hands-on introduction to working with FrameMaker.

This class has been specially created for STC Carolina Chapter members looking to break into FrameMaker jobs.

Presenter: Kay Ethier of Bright Path Solutions

Time: 9:00 am - 3:30 pm

Place: Bright Path Solutions, 100 Park Drive (Ste 204), RTP

Cost: \$125 for full day of training. (This special STC rate includes workbook, lunch, and FrameMaker 6.0 demo CD.) Class limited to 8 participants.

Contact: **Leatta Welch** at 303-3377 or leatta@mindspring.com.

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Carolina Resources

STC Carolina Web site:
www.stc-carolina.org

Meeting Telephone Message:
(919) 406-6600

Online Newsletter:
www.stc-carolina.org/pubs/communique/index.html

STC Metrolina (Charlotte)
Web site:
www.stc.org/region2/mnc/

STC Piedmont (Greensboro)
Web site:
www.stc.org/region2/pd/

Monthly meeting announcements

November and December monthly programs:

November 9, 2000

Students from the NC State chapter will present.

Time: Join us for networking from 6:00 to 6:30 pm, and then from 6:30 to 8:00 pm for the monthly program.

Place: IBM Recreation Center, Davis Drive, Research Triangle Park

Directions: From I-40, take the Davis Drive exit (#280) and turn right at the ramp signal. Go straight past Cornwallis Road until you reach the IBM security booth. Before you reach the security gates, turn right into the Recreation Center parking lot.

December 14, 2000

Holiday party. For details, go to the Carolina Chapter Monthly Programs page at www.stc-carolina.org/www/upcoming.shtml.

STC Leadership Meeting

First Wednesday of every month

Time: 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm

Place: EMC2 (formerly Data General), Maple Conference Room

Details: Members of the Administrative Council and Chapter Leadership meet to discuss the chapter's goals and direction. Everyone is welcome, please join us!

Directions: EMC2 is located at 62 T.W. Alexander Drive in RTP, just past the intersection of Alexander and E. Cornwallis Road.

Newsletter deadlines

Articles for publication in our newsletters are due by 3 pm on the 7th of every month. Articles—on chapter business—will be published in our print-based newsletter. Please submit them to **David Heath** at heathd@us.ibm.com.

All other articles will be published in our Web-based newsletter. Please submit them to **Mark Hoskins** at mhoskins@cisco.com.

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Carolina Communiqué

Managing Editor

G. David Heath

heathd@us.ibm.com

(919) 254-1649 (work)

Production Editor

Naomi A. Kleid, Ph.D.

kleid@us.ibm.com

(919) 254-1809 (work)

Layout Design

Robin Monday Frey

robinmonday.frey@cplc.com

(919) 546-7458 (work)

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Carolina Chapter
P.O. Box 13571
RTP, North Carolina 27709
www.stc-carolina.org

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