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March/April 2001

Master Neuburger Extols FrameMaker 6.0 Virtues



By Melissa Clark

Whoever said FrameMaker is dead, didn't know how much Thomas Neuburger, author of the new book *The Masters Series: FrameMaker 6*, has at stake.

At the January SVC meeting, which drew the largest crowd in five years, Neuburger spoke of some of the major interface improvements with FrameMaker 6:

- Book file capabilities
- Online help
- Output to PDF and HTML formats
- Support of XML output

Book Improvements

Some of the most beneficial improvements are activities that can now be performed at the book level, such as: search and replace, spell-check, chapter numbering, volume numbering, and editable field to rename files.

"(I) love the new bookmaking function. It makes books much easier," said Linda Lappin, a senior SVC member and attendee

of the January meeting.

RELATED STORIES
Is FrameMaker Dead?... 4
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NEW TOOLS

What Hot New Tools Technical Writers Can Learn to Advance Careers

By Marilyn Merkel

When looking for a new job or contract, it seems that how well technical writers can write is not as important as what authoring and publishing software tools they can use. There may be differences of degree between contracting and permanent positions, but the statement remains true. Many tech writers wish that employers cared about how well they can write; Lois Rew, head of the San Jose State University technical writing program, was quoted in this newsletter voicing the same thought. The people who hire technical writers, however, only seem to want to get the job done as fast as possible. Time spent ramping up on the tools is expensive.

To find out what hot tools are in demand, I asked recruiters from three well-known agencies:

- Andrew Davis, president of Synergistech
- Sarah Benson, president of Solutions
- Jane Fetisoff, co-founder of Libra Associates

In addition, I talked to Gary Conroy, host of the technical writing page at About.com. I also checked technical writer job offers on several Web sites, plus our own STC job list.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Goodbye Printing Press, Hello Electronic Printing

By Joe Lowell

Because of the World Wide Web and PDFs, the Silicon Valley chapter can finally wave goodbye to an annual bill of \$20,000 plus to print each issue of the *Connection*.

You can find this issue in full color at the chapter Web site: STC.org/region8/svc/www/index.html

The printed issue you are looking at marks the last one the chapter plans to send its members. We will send out a tickler next month to you to remind you to look for the April meeting flyer and then subsequent newsletters on the chapter Web site.

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Administrative Council

President

Guy Haas
(408) 545-2514
gkhaas@usa.net

Vice President

Vacant

Directors

Programs and Events
Manager:
Emmah Smyth
smythemmah@yahoo.com

Regional Activities and
Employment Information
Manager: Vacant

Public Relations Manager:
Beau Cain
(650) 906-3002
bodiodo@yahoo.com

Membership and Volunteer
Manager:
Grace Pamidi
(408) 531-9223

SIGs Manager:
Melissa Clark
(408) 231-5605
lissa_1978@yahoo.com

Newsletter Managing Editor:
Joe Lowell
(408) 853-6652
jdlowell@yahoo.com

Treasurer
Fred Sampson
(408) 367-4667
fred_sampson@peoplesoft.com

Secretary:
Vicki Blodgett
(831) 429-0159
vickib@cruzio.com

Nominations Manager and
Immediate Past President:
Virginia Beecher
(408) 522-7162
virginia@idiom.com

Region 8 Director-Sponsor
Andrea Ames
(650) 365-7520
andrea@verbal-imagery.com

About the STC

The Society for Technical Communication (STC) is a nonprofit international organization of more than 20,000 members and 144 chapters worldwide. As the largest professional society devoted to technical communication, STC works toward educating and advancing the skills and knowledge of its members.

Membership

Membership includes writers, editors, artists, illustrators, printers, publishers, educators, students, engineers, and scientists in all areas of technology. Society membership is \$95 per year, plus a one-time \$15 enrollment fee. Student memberships are \$40 per year. To join, contact the International Society office at membership@stc-va.org, or phone (703) 522-4114.

Chapter Meetings

Silicon Valley Chapter (SVC) meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month (unless otherwise determined) at the Four Points Hotel by Sheraton in Sunnyvale. For a schedule of events, directions, and a description of the meetings, refer to the chapter meeting pages within each issue of *Connection*, call (650) 961-3127, or see www.stc.org/region8/svc/www

Administrative Council Meetings

Council meetings take place on the second Thursday of the month at 6:15 p.m. Contact the president for the meeting location. All members are invited to attend.

About Connection

Connection, the newsletter of the Silicon Valley chapter of STC, is published six times a year as a benefit to all chapter members. One-year subscriptions are from June to May for \$25. Contact Thomas Albert, at talbert@WORDesign.com to subscribe.

Connection Reprints

Material appearing in *Connection* may be reprinted if credit is given and a copy is sent to the newsletter managing editor.

Article Submission Guidelines

We solicit your contributions on topics regarding technical communication—tools of the trade, challenges in the workplace, contracting, deadline management, and so on. We also welcome letters to the editor, reviews of meetings and workshops, and calendar entries. E-mail your contributions by the second Friday of the month to newsletter managing editor Joe Lowell at jdlowell@yahoo.com.

Limit articles to 400 words, and submit them in the body of an e-mail, or as an ASCII text file or Word document attached to e-mail. Include a title for your article, your name, phone number, and a brief biography. Articles undergo editing for space and content. We welcome graphics, illustrations, and tables to illustrate stories. We also publish photos of chapter-related events as space allows in each issue.

Advertising

You can reach more than 1,600 technical communicators by advertising in *Connection*. Contact Ivan Linderman at (408) 378-5634, or at ivan@bkbytes.com for information or a contract. Send ads as line art or half-tone EPS files at 600 dpi, including all fonts, via e-mail attachment.

Rates:

| Size (Inches) | Member | Non-Mem. |
|---------------|----------|----------|
| 2.25 x 3 | \$80.00 | \$100.00 |
| 2.25 x 4.5 | \$125.00 | \$150.00 |
| 4.75 x 3 | \$165.00 | \$200.00 |
| 4.75 x 4 | \$225.00 | \$270.00 |
| 2.25 x 9 | \$225.00 | \$270.00 |

Ten Common Mistakes by Job Seekers

By Jack Molisani

Overview

Recruiters (both HR and agency recruiters) receive tens if not hundreds of resumes a day, each of which must be read, evaluated against current job requirements, processed, clarified and filed.

If you want them to help you find a job, help them do their jobs.

The Common Mistakes

Presented in order of chronology, not severity. The less applicable experience you have, the fewer mistakes you can get away with. We'll look at solutions to the problems as well.

1 Not Following Submission Directions

Read the directions!

First Impressions Last

Email, Fax or Snail Mail?

Formatted or ASCII Resume?

2 Not Building Personal Relationships

Develop a personal relationship with your recruiter.

You want someone who will sing your praises to the next person in the hiring process.

...especially if you are not an exact match or have some other special situation.

Plus, when a cool job comes in, who do you think they will call first?

3 Bad Manners

It's poor form to mail your resume to 45 recruiters in one email...

...especially when you display them all in the To: field!

Keep a log of where your resume has been sent.

Don't insult the recruiter. (I'm not kidding—it happens!)

4 Applying When You Are Not Even Remotely Qualified

Don't apply without considering the requirements.

Do apply for jobs that are a bit of a stretch, but at least be in the ballpark!

Don't do "shotgun" applications.

Pay attention to the "must have" vs. "nice to have" requirements.

5 Not Summarizing Skills vs. Requirements

Recruiters get tens if not hundreds of resumes a day.

Not all recruiters have the time to read your resume from top to bottom—some just skim for keywords and needed skills.

If you are qualified, the recruiter will write a summary of how your skills match the job requirements before passing it on.

However, they are not professional technical writers. Do you really want them to decide if you are a good enough match to pass on?

Be pro-active: send a matrix of the job requirements vs. your skills so they don't have to do it for you.

If you don't have one of the needed skills, this is where you say, "I don't have XYZ, but I do have ABC, which is very similar."

Suddenly, you are the recruiter's best friend:

They didn't have to search for the information.

You typed the summary for them.

You pointed out important information they may have missed.

All they had to do is verify the information and pass it on.

6 Misnaming Your Resume

Remember, recruiters get tens if not hundreds of electronic resumes a day.

Put yourself in the recruiter's shoes.

Would you want to receive 100 resumes a day named "resume.doc"?

Name your resume so it can be found easily: for example, "Joe_Jones.doc"

7 Poorly Writing or Formatting Your Resume

Your resume is the first sample of your writing skill.

Programmers can get away with bad writing and formatting, but technical writers cannot!

Documentation managers judge candidates based on their resumes...and will disqualify you if you don't apply the same standards to your resume that you do your documentation.

Pay attention to:

Headers, Indentation and White Space
Poor Use of Authoring Tool
Misspellings (including the name of STC!)

8 Misevaluation of Importances

Highlight your strengths.

Minimize your weaknesses

For example, put the most applicable information, experience or skills near the top of your resume.

Put less- or non-applicable experience near the bottom.

9 Not Anticipating and Answering Questions

Recruiters wonder about oddities in resumes, so be pro-active and explain them.

Examples:

Gaps in Your Work History

Your Citizenship or Work Visa Status

Moving from Contract to Perm

Moving from Perm to Contract (to a lesser degree)

Need Relocation Assistance if Out-of-state?

10 Not Keeping Your Skills Current

Not knowing the latest authoring tools is mistake ten.

If you can really just pick them up in a week, how come you haven't already done so?

Between chapter meetings, chapter mentor programs, and regional/international conferences, there is no reason not to stay current.

Summary

- Follow submission directions.
- Build personal relationships.
- Use good manners and netiquette.
- Apply for jobs for which you are qualified.
- Include a summary of how your skills match the job requirements when you submit your resume.
- Name your electronic resume so it can be identified.
- Apply usability factors to your resume like you do to manuals.
- Highlight your strength, minimize your weaknesses.
- Anticipate and answer questions.
- Keep your skills current. ■

Jack Molisani is president of Clarity Technical Services.

◀ FRAMEMAKER 6, Page 1

Unfortunately, these changes mean that some features in your chapter files, such as the numbering system, may not work correctly when upgraded to version 6. However, users can re-establish these through the Book, Numbering... properties.

Users also can drag and drop files to move them around in the book.

"You can drag chapters around just by moving them," said Neuburger, while demonstrating the drag-and-drop feature in the book file. "In fact, it's a little too easy to drag and drop (by) moving them, but it's easy enough to move them back to where they were."

Online Help

In this release, the online help connects related topics together with a hyperlink at the top in what Neuburger calls a "home page for main concepts."

"You're never more than one click away from all the topics related to a big topic," said Neuburger. "Because of the logic that's (built) into how information is connected, you're never very far from the hub of the five or six important circles in the thing."

But some FrameMaker users found the online help a bit daunting.

"There's a lot of extraneous explanatory passages that could be easily deleted," said Lorna Singer,



Tom Neuburger signs a copy of the book he wrote, *The Masters Series: FrameMaker 6*.

an SVC member who attended the meeting.

Export to PDF and HTML

An informal poll of the meeting's audience showed that most attendees do not use FrameMaker strictly for print output. Some produce online manuals using HTML and others create PDFs of their manuals.

Improvements in PDF conversion now make it easier for users to export FrameMaker files to PDF. The improvements also give users control of document information and Named Destinations, which identify paragraphs referenced by cross-references and hypertext links.

In FrameMaker 5.5.6, HoTaMaLe was used to export Frame files to

HTML. FrameMaker 6 now uses WebWorks Publisher, a much more robust conversion tool, which produces clean and controllable HTML and allows you to customize your WebWorks Publisher settings and templates.

XML Support

Although XML is supported in this release, it is limited. Unicode is currently not supported, nor can a user save a document as XML and then take it back to FrameMaker.

Neuburger predicted, though, that Adobe will continue development of XML integration with FrameMaker to stay competitive.

"Frame will be integrated (with XML) as part of the workflow," predicted Neuburger. "(In the future) you will see XML as something you can edit."

Testing... 1, 2, 3

Although it seems that a lot of the potential users of FrameMaker 6 are still in their initial testing phase, several of the attendees of the January meeting said they are already using FrameMaker 6.

Neuburger's book, which he created using FrameMaker 6, can be purchased through his website at www.twelfthnight.com/. ■

Melissa Clark is a technical writer for e-Publishing Corp. in Santa Clara.

Is FrameMaker Dead?

By Melissa Clark

Although FrameMaker has long been rumored to be dying out, Adobe FrameMaker Product Marketing Manager Jennifer Brieger assured me "Frame is not going away."

At the January STC meeting and in a recent InfoWorld article by Robert X. Cringely, it was also rumored that the FrameMaker group at Adobe had disbanded.

Shortly after they began, rumors were squelched by an Adobe post-

ing on message boards. "...Adobe is completely committed to developing and supporting the FrameMaker product," said the posting. "Currently, the FrameMaker engineering and product management teams are busy working on the next major release of the product, including developing new features based on customer feedback."

According to Brieger, development on the product is still continuing

and the FrameMaker group has not disbanded.

"FrameMaker has done tremendously well this year and we have attended and held more marketing events than ever before," said Brieger.

FrameMaker can be found at the following upcoming seminars and conferences: Seybold, WinWriters, Annual STC, FOSE and XML Europe 2001 conferences. ■

New Law Affects Independent Contractors

By Karen E. Crumlin

According to California State Senate Bill 542, which was passed into law during the 1999-2000 legislative session, all “service recipients” filing Form 1099-MISC for independent contractors (ICs) are required to submit a form to the Employment Development Department (EDD). The *Report of Independent Contractors* form, also known as form DE 542, identifies an IC’s name, address, social security number (SSN), contract start date and expiration date, and the exact amount of the contract. In addition, the businesses federal and state identification number, SSN, name, address, and telephone number is reported on form DE 542.

The new law is designed to increase the collection of child support by locating parents who are delinquent in child support payments. The EDD provides the IC information directly to Department of Justice (DOJ), and the DOJ provides it to the Department of Child Support Services. The information is also available to the Franchise Tax Board for tax collection purposes.

The EDD defines a “service recipient” as any individual, person, corporation, association, partnership, or agent deriving trade or business income from ICs within the state of California. ICs are considered individuals not employed by the business or government entity, but

“... Some have suggested that this legislation is a crackdown on independent contractors, however for companies, this is merely a different format for reporting information already provided.”

who receive compensation or execute a contract for services performed in or outside of the state of California. If the contractor is working for a service recipient that is licensed to operate in the state of California, the service recipient must submit a form for that IC, even if a contractor physically works outside of California.

EDD representatives stress that this new law applies to IC’s, not individuals working under a corporation, general partnership, or limited liability company. To avoid confusion, the EDD created the scenarios shown in the table.

Businesses must report this information within 20 days of making the first payment of \$600 or more to an IC or within 20 days of entering into a contract for \$600 or more with an IC. This new law takes affect as of January 1, 2001 and IC information must be re-submitted every year. Those not complying with this new law could face a penalty of \$24 for each late form or \$490 for failure to report the information.

Marion McGovern, co-founder and president of M² Inc. says, “The stated intent of the new law is one that all Californians should endorse. It affords the state the means to identify income generated by deadbeat parents and thereby improve the child support system. Some have suggested that this legislation is a crackdown on independent contractors, however for companies, this is merely a different format for reporting information already provided.”

For additional information, or to obtain form DE 542, visit the EDD Web site at www.edd.ca.gov or call the EDD at 916-657-0529. ■

Karen Crumlin owns Hard Copy Management in Los Altos, CA. (www.hardcopyinc.com)

| If the Service Recipient Is... | And... | Then... |
|--|--|--|
| Headquartered in California, but has offices inside or outside of the state, | | All ICs must be reported. |
| Headquartered outside of California, but has offices in the state, | If the IC is engaged by the California office, | Only the ICs deriving income from the California location must be reported. |
| Headquartered outside of California, but has offices in the state, | If the IC is not engaged by the California office, | None of the ICs should be reported, even if the service is performed in California. |
| Headquartered in another state, | Has no California office, | None of the ICs should be reported, even if the service is performed in California. |

Hardware Application Alert

By Linda O'Maley

This month's *Connection* defines what a Hardware Application Alert is.

Feedback

Send feedback by the first Friday of the following month to curly@best.com. If your feedback is used, your name will appear along with your contribution in the next *Connection*.

Preview

The next issue of *Connection* will define a Data Sheet. To help define this document product, by the first Friday of next month, write to curly@best.com. If your suggestions are used, your name will appear in the *Connection*. ■

Linda O'Maley has degrees in electrical engineering technology, sociology, and library science. She has been a technical writer for 15 years, a manager for 1 year, and has worked at nine companies. She currently works for VxTel.

| | |
|---|---|
| Audience | Application Engineer or Design Engineer |
| Source Contributor and Materials | Typically, a company's Application Engineers or Design Engineers can provide source materials. |
| Definition | A warning about late-breaking problems with a product. |
| Scope | Includes a description of a problem that occurs when using a company's product, a short-term fix (if one exists), and projections for a long-term fix (if any). |
| Purpose | A company issues a Hardware Application Alert to maintain credibility by first warning customers about possible damage to equipment if a chip is used in a particular way and then giving customers an available fix to save their time. |
| Use | Customers use a Hardware Application Alert to learn about problems with a company's product and to follow procedures for fixing the problem if a fix exists. |
| General Outline | I. Problem II. Short-Term Fix (if any exists) III. Long-Term Fix (if any exists) |
| Distribution Schedule | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial releases occur as quickly as possible. • Re-releases occur as often as necessary, as a situation warrants. • Typically, Application Engineering drives the release schedule, as they are the ones who receive calls when there are problems with a product. |
| Security | If a company's product has a serious problem (that is, the company would be at risk if its competitors were to broadcast the problem with the product), distributing the Hardware Application Alert to customers can be on a selective "need-to-know" basis. |
| How Tech Writers Add Value | By writing Application Alerts, a technical writer adds value by reducing support costs. |

XML Mailing List to Address Host of Issues

XML-DOC is a new online mailing list for documentation professionals and anyone else interested in discussing the application of XML tools and techniques to the creation of documentation. Topics that are highly encouraged on the list include:

- XML-based content- and document-management systems
- single-sourcing with XML
- DocBook, the SGML/XML and data type definition for documentation moving to XML authoring from a FrameMaker environment
- converting legacy documents to XML

- publishing, transforming and delivering XML content
- XML training and certification
- document analysis and data modeling
- profiling and customizing for multiple audiences and delivery formats

To subscribe to the list, send a blank e-mail message to: xml-doc-subscribe@egroups.com.

You can also subscribe at the XML-DOC website, www.egroups.com/subscribe/xml-doc/.

Michael Smith, the list moderator, says, "My hope for XML-DOC is that it will not only help to raise

the level of awareness about XML in the documentation community, but also give us, as technical communicators, a clear point of contact with the XML developers and product vendors who are now creating and refining the XML authoring tools, content management software, and XML publishing solutions that many of us will eventually end up using." ■

Your best source for career advancement in Silicon Valley
stc.org/region8/svc/www

STC Returning \$750,000 to Local Chapters for Programs, Activities

By Andrea L. Ames

The following decisions were made at the Winter: 2001 meeting of the STC Board of Directors held in San Diego, California.

- Approved fiscal year 2001 income and expenses as of 31 October 2000. Income and expenses are well within budget. STC will be returning about two-thirds of a million dollars to chapters to support their fiscal year 2001 programs and activities.

Chapter Formations

- Approved formation of the Australia chapter, with a \$350 USD start-up grant (Region 5).
- Approved formation of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute student chapter (Troy, New York, USA), with a \$150 USD start-up grant (Region 1).
- Approved formation of the Hill Country student chapter (San Marcos, Texas, USA), with a \$150 USD start-up grant (Region 5).

The total number of chapters is now 153, with 33 being student chapters.

Appointments

- Appointed Kathryn M. Poe to be Manager, STC Public Relations Competition Committee.
- Appointed Paula Stanzioni to be Manager, Education and Research Special Interest Group.

Grants and Loans

- Approved a merit grant of \$3,000 USD to the Mercer University student chapter to build its scholarship fund.
- Approved a research grant of \$10,000 USD for Eva R. Brumberger to complete a study titled *"The Rhetoric of Typography: A Study Investigating Typeface Personality and Its Impact on the Reading Process."*

More Tidbits

The Board also heard reports about and discussed several other topics of interest.

New STC logo—A graphic toolkit and templates for STC materials will be made available to chapters (presidents, newsletter editors, and

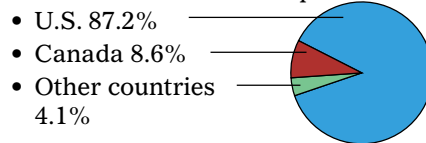
webmasters), Society-level committees, and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and placed on the STC Web site in March. These tools will help guide groups in implementing the new look. Work is underway to redesign the STC Web site. Watch for the first official use of the new logo in the Preliminary Annual Conference Program—coming soon!

Elections

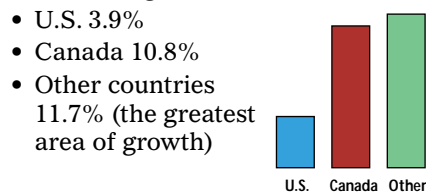
This year, the balloting process will include an option to vote online. The 2001 election material will contain information necessary to ensure secure online voting. Voting online will be optional—members may still choose to vote by mail.

Membership

STC continues to grow at a steady rate, and membership now stands at 23,553. Total membership is projected to reach 26,000 by the end of March. Current distribution of membership:



STC's annualized, 10-year growth rate is 4.6%, with growth rates as follows:



Membership Directory

The STC membership directory has been placed online. It enables members to search on members' first and last names. The results display the member's name, address, phone, fax, e-mail, chapter, grade, and date joined.

Annual Conference

Preparations for the 48th Annual Conference in Chicago, Illinois, USA, in May 2001 are well underway. The conference program committee reviewed nearly 400 proposals and selected about 440 speakers for 256 sessions. About 41 booths have already been contracted for the vendor exhibit.

Technical Communication Journal

Abstracts and PDFs of the 1996 and 1997 issues are available on the Technical Communication Online Web site. Site designers have incorporated into the Web site recommendations from usability studies performed by graduate students at Mercer University. Check it out!

STC Governance

This year, the STC Board of Directors is conducting a series of workshops at its regular meetings to evaluate governance. This activity is an outgrowth of STC's new mission statement: "Designing the future of technical communication." What model of governance would be most effective in leading STC into that future? Aspects being evaluated include:

- The structure of representation
- The way that decisions are made
- The balance of volunteer and office staff workloads
- Communication patterns

A clear picture of leadership has dominated the workshops—one that:

- Focuses on trends, vision, strategy, and best practices
- Embraces outside influences
- Concentrates on setting policy rather than on operational details

A concluding workshop in May will set short-term and long-term goals for meeting those objectives.

About Our Host

This Board meeting was hosted by the San Diego chapter. We had a really fun evening at the San Diego Zoo, where the chapter had arranged for us to meet some of the locals. They included an African hedgehog, an adorable porcupine, a beautiful kestrel, and several other residents. (My favorite was the porcupine—she wandered around on her hind legs trying to snatch a cracker from the keeper's hand.)

Note: Special thanks to Ellen Fenwick, the Region 7 Director-Sponsor, who compiled the Board actions from the meeting and provided some of the additional notes for this article. ■

Andrea Ames is Region 8 Director-Sponsor.

Silicon Valley STC March 2001 Chapter Meeting/Job Fair MANAGING YOUR JOB SEARCH

Speaker: Meryl Natchez,
CEO of TechProse

Date: Thursday, March 22, 2001

Abstract: The presentation focuses on how to manage the process of looking for a job, which is a job in itself. It includes how to:

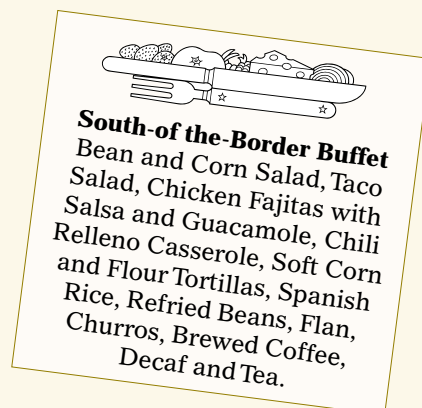
- Clarify your personal and professional objectives
- Research prospects
- Determine whether agency representation would be valuable for you
- Understand the contracting process and whether this is an avenue that fits for you
- Develop realistic expectations and schedules
- Make your resume shine
- Handle the interview process

Meryl Natchez has been in the technology field since 1978. She is CEO of TechProse, a technology consulting firm in Lafayette, CA. TechProse was on Inc magazine's Top 500 list of fastest growing privately held businesses in the United States in 1998. TechProse was No. 17 on a list of the fastest growing Bay Area companies in 2000. The company recently received the Arthur Andersen Best Practices award for Exceeding Customer Expectations. TechProse places contractors on writing, training, and IT development projects and also does entire writing and training projects in-house.

Schedule:

- 4:00 p.m. Vendor setup in Champagne Room
- 5:30 - 8:30 p.m. Job Fair, Networking
- 6:45 - 8:00 p.m. Dinner Buffet available
- 7:45 - 8:45 p.m. Presentation by Meryl Natchez

Location: Four Points Hotel by Sheraton, 1250 Lakeside Drive, Sunnyvale, CA.



Chapter Meeting Reservation, March 22, 2001 MANAGING YOUR JOB SEARCH

Name: _____

email address: _____

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20.00 member/food | <input type="checkbox"/> \$12.00 member/no food |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$30.00 non-member/food | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00 non-member/no food |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00 student/food | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 8.00 student/no food |

Mail form and check to:
STC Meeting Reservations
PO Box 3709
Saratoga, CA 95070-1709

To guarantee your space for the March 22 meeting, mail your reservation, paid in full, on or before March 12. Your reservation is guaranteed only if payment is received by March 15. A \$5 late fee will be charged for any reservation received after March 15. The late fee also applies to walk-ins. We regret that scheduled speakers occasionally cancel. If that happens, we make every effort to find a suitable substitute program.



Directions: Four Points Hotel by Sheraton, 1250 Lakeside Drive, Sunnyvale, CA

From North: From Highway 101 southbound, exit Lawrence Expwy. Take the first left at Oakmead. Then take the first left at Lakeside Dr. The hotel is on the right.

From South: From Highway 101 northbound, exit Lawrence Expwy. Turn left at the first light at end of the ramp. Make a left at Oakmead, and left at Lakeside Dr. The hotel is on the right.

Extra Parking: If the hotel parking lot is full, additional parking is available behind the hotel.

Take Lakeside Dr. back to Oakmead and turn left. Go down three or four buildings (you will see a big sign on the left: Oakmead Village Office Park 1255-1263.) Turn left into the park lot.

The entrance to the Sheraton is between Building 1259 (Widata) and 1261 (Digital Market). The walk to the Ballroom is about two minutes. Cross over the bridge onto the Sheraton property. Turn left and walk to the last building by the pool. Turn right to enter the building and walk to the front of the lobby. The Ballroom is on the corridor on your left just before the front entrance of the lobby.

Silicon Valley STC April 2001 Chapter Meeting WHEN I GROW UP, I WANT TO WRITE API DOCS

Speaker: James Bisso

Abstract: You've all seen the job listings for technical writers to document APIs. Have you ever wondered what all the fuss is about? Learn all about this lucrative field from somebody who's been there.

The presentation will answer the following questions:

- What are APIs?
- What are the different kinds of API documentation?
- Who's the audience for API documentation?
- Why do software developers want API documentation?

Date: Thursday, April 26, 2001

James Bisso, M.A., is the president of Bitzone LLC. He has worked as a staff and contract technical writer since 1988, specializing in API documentation and training at such companies as Oracle, Inprise, and Taligent. He has taught computer science at Golden Gate University, San Jose State University Extension, College of San Mateo, and Mills College. He can be contacted at jbisso@bitzone.com

Schedule:

| | |
|-----------|----------------------------------|
| 6:00 p.m. | Networking/Jobs corner/Beverages |
| 7:00 p.m. | Announcements |
| 7:15 p.m. | Presentation |

Location: Four Points Hotel by Sheraton, 1250 Lakeside Drive, Sunnyvale, CA.



Chapter Meeting Reservation, April 26, 2001 WHEN I GROW UP, I WANT TO WRITE API DOCS

Name: _____

email address: _____

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20.00 member/food | <input type="checkbox"/> \$12.00 member/no food |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$30.00 non-member/food | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00 non-member/no food |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00 student/food | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 8.00 student/no food |

Mail form and check to:
STC Meeting Reservations
PO Box 3709
Saratoga, CA 95070-1709

To guarantee your space for the April 26 meeting, mail your reservation, paid in full, on or before April 16. Your reservation is guaranteed only if payment is received by April 19. A \$5 late fee will be charged for any reservation received after April 19. The late fee also applies to walk-ins. We regret that scheduled speakers occasionally cancel. If that happens, we make every effort to find a suitable substitute program.

ASI Golden Gate Chapter 18th Annual Conference

Dedicated Indexing Software and Voice Recognition Software

The American Society of Indexers-Golden Gate Chapter invites you to attend its full-day program from 8:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on April 28, 2001 at the Firehouse at Fort Mason in San Francisco. A buffet lunch by Green's, San Francisco's premier vegetarian restaurant, will be included. The topic of this year's conference is Dedicated Indexing Software and Voice Recognition Software. Speakers include

Frances Lennie of CINDEX, Gale Rhoades of MACREX, and Kamm Schreiner of SKY Index.

For more information and registration forms see home.pacbell.net/nansu/asi.htm or contact J. Naomi Linzer, Treasurer ASI-GG POB 1341, Redway, CA 95560 jnlinzer@saber.net phone: (707) 923-4361 fax: (360) 838-5600

Annual SVC Job Fair

Join dozens of job recruiters and companies at the March 22 meeting starting at 5:30 p.m. Bring lots of resumes and get ready for a full evening.

Meryl Natchez's presentation at 7:45 p.m. directly follows the job fair. Her speech will focus on how to manage the process of looking for a job, which is a full-time job in itself.

Ames Outlines Qualifications to Serve as Second Vice President



By Andrea L. Ames,
STC Region 8
Director-Sponsor
(1998-2001),
Candidate for
STC Second
Vice President

In response to inquiries and requests from several chapters' leaders for an article about my candidacy for STC Second Vice President, I'd like to share my thoughts with you about our future—yours, mine, STC's, and the future of the technical communication industry as a whole—and why I want to continue to serve you on the STC Board of Directors for the next four years. As you might know, the candidate elected to the office of Second Vice President will serve for one year in that position and will then serve one year each as First Vice President, President, and Immediate Past President. This is an important vote, and I hope this article enables you to make an informed decision when you cast your ballot.

If you have any questions about me or my candidacy, feel free to contact me at andrea@verbal-imagery.com. You can also visit my Web site (www.verbal-imagery.com) for postings of recent chapter-meeting presentations and other information.

The Vision

If elected, I will work for the next four years to raise our strategic value—both as individuals and as an industry—to the organizations for which we work.

My vision for the industry is one in which:

- Our main goal is to ensure users' success—NOT to write documentation
- We design and develop information to enable users to use products—NOT to fill in for the deficiencies in product design

We will no longer define ourselves by the information products (manuals, help, etc.) we deliver—nor the tools we use to develop them. Instead, our employers will recognize the value we bring to the prod-

ucts and information we design and develop. Think about it: The real value we bring is not the documents we develop but the user's increased success! My goal is to work to help the organizations in and with which we work understand this and help enable them to get the most value from us.

As I've traveled around the country speaking with members, I've met many of you who share this vision. From my 17 years of experience in the industry, my vast network of associates, and the strategic work I've done with various kinds of organizations, I'm convinced that this is the right vision. The question remains: How will it happen?

The Implementation

The move toward this vision has already begun—primarily via STC. As our new mission statement proclaims, we are certainly “designing the future of technical communication.” STC is one of the most valuable and powerful tools we have, and our work in STC is one of the most important contributions we can make to our own careers. The power of many, the visibility of a large and well-respected professional organization, and vision and leadership are the ingredients that will change the face of our industry.

To do this, I want to work with the society as I have during my 14-year STC career to enable members of our industry to become leaders and to be recognized for that leadership—particularly within our organizations and among our employers' and clients' industries. Working with the Board of Directors, committee managers, and chapter leaders, I can support and maintain important programs—like branding and governance—that are already working to move us in this direction. I can also work with other leaders to devise new initiatives to raise the visibility of STC and our industry, as well as help our employers and clients further recognize our value.

Why Me?

Not one to sit around and wait for someone else to take the lead, I've

spent most of the past four to five years changing our industry to fit my vision. In my own career, I have focused on learning and developing skills, technologies, and tools to design and develop information for products and user experiences, rather than documentation deliverables. I am a technical communicator specializing in audience analysis, information and interaction design for product user interfaces and online assistance, usability, and user-centered product and information design and development process.

To assist others in the effort to move toward the future, I've acted as a mentor, teacher, and educational certificate coordinator to:

- Design programs and courses around these skills and technologies
- Impart to my students strategies and problem-solving skills so that they can participate in this new world
- Guide those asking for assistance to develop their careers in similar directions

RELATED STORIES

Vote for Director-Sponsor Candidates... 12
SVC Members Needed to Run for Office..... 13

I've spoken at many STC chapter meetings, regional conferences, and annual conferences, and met many of you—the members of our industry. My presentations are aimed toward helping you make career development choices that increase your value to the industry and to your employers and clients.

I've encouraged you to:

- Think outside the traditional documentation box
- Evangelize usability and user-centered design and development techniques within your organization
- Participate in your organization's design and development process at a strategic level

I've used my term as Director-Sponsor, and my year as Society Bylaws Committee Manager, to learn as much about you and the Society as possible. Understanding how our organization works enables me to influence STC's direction and effect

▶ AMES QUALIFICATIONS, Page 11

◀ AMES QUALIFICATIONS, Page 10

change. I've also participated very actively in two very important Society initiatives:

- Integrated branding
- Governance

The results of these programs are already permeating the Society and changing the way we do business. From the Board of Directors to the Society Office to Society-level committees to chapters to members, everyone will feel the impact of these very positive changes.

I've also served the Society extensively in other international-level positions and at the regional, local and chapter levels. Details follow in "STC Awards and Service" and are posted at:

www.verbal-imagery.com/PositionStatement.pdf.

And although I've spent a lot of time talking to members of the profession, I draw from extensive experience of my own in the corporate world, academia, and government—both as a direct employee and as a consultant.

STC Awards and Service

Honors and awards:

- Distinguished Chapter Service Award, 1996
- Distinguished Technical Communication, STC Newsletter Competition, for News & Views, Metro Philadelphia (formerly Delaware Valley) newsletter, 1988-89
- Award of Achievement, STC PR Competition, 1995-6
- Award of Excellence, Northern California Technical Communication Competition, for VRML Sourcebook, 2nd ed., 1997
- Award of Merit, Northern California Technical Communication Competition, for VRML Sourcebook, 1995
- Apex Award of Achievement, Region 8 Web site, 2000
- Full-time assistantship, Drexel University, 1989-90
- Member, Golden Key National Honor Society
- Member Sigma Tau Chi (STX), STC's National Honor Society, since 1989

Society-level Participation

- Manager, Society Bylaws Committee 2000-01
- Member, Communication Advisory Committee 2000-01
- Director-Sponsor, Region 8 1998-2001
- Best of Show Judge, International Online Communication Competition 2001
- Judge, International Online Communication Competition 1998-2000
- Manager, STC Newsletter Competition 1995-98
- Presenter, STC Annual Conference 1995-98, 2001
- Judge, Chapter Newsletter Competition 1992-93 and 1994-95
- SIG member: Emerging Technologies, Information Design, Management, Marketing Communication, Online Information, Quality, Scientific Communication, Usability, Visual Design
- Peer reviewer, Technical Communication

Regional/local Participation

- Presenter, Writer in the Workplace Conference 1997, 2001
- Presenter, Region 5 Conference 2000
- Presenter, Region 6 Conference 2000
- Lead judge, Northern California Technical Communication Competition 1992-93 and 1996-97
- Presenter, Region 8 Conference 1996, 2000 (Region 7-8 joint conference)
- Manager, Region 8 Conference Public Relations 1994

Chapter-level Participation

- President, Silicon Valley chapter, 1997-98
- Director of Nominations, Silicon Valley chapter 1997
- Presenter, Houston, Lone Star, Phoenix, Puget Sound, Tokyo chapters 2000
- Presenter, Willamette Valley chapter 1997, 2000
- Presenter, All Region 8 chapters 1998-2001

- Presenter, Aloha, Berkeley, San Francisco, and Silicon Valley chapters 1996
- Columnist, Signature, San Diego chapter newsletter 1994-95
- Vice President for Public Relations, San Diego chapter 1994-95
- Manager, Silicon Valley chapter Public Relations Committee 1992-94
- Founder and President/Newsletter Editor, Philadelphia student chapter 1989-90
- Newsletter Editor, Delaware Valley chapter 1987-89

ANDREA L. AMES, M.S., is a technical communicator specializing in audience analysis, information and interaction design for product user interfaces and online help systems, usability, and user-centered product and information design and development process. She has 17 years' experience designing, developing, and producing usable technical and scientific information for products, software user interfaces, multimedia and online-help systems, and print documentation. Ames owns Ucentrics, a user-centered information and interaction design and usability consulting company.

She is also a principal technical writer at Vertical Networks, where she designs information and interaction for product user interfaces, as well as embedded user assistance and custom help systems. She is a member of the Society for Technical Communication (STC) international board of directors in her position as director-sponsor of STC's Region 8; a junior fellow of the San Diego Supercomputer Center (SDSC); and a published author and freelance writer. She teaches at the university level, speaks internationally at professional conferences, and presents seminars and workshops on audience analysis, information and interaction design, usability, and user-centered process topics.

You Must Renew to Vote—Don't Miss Your Chance to Vote for the New Director-Sponsor!

By Andrea L. Ames, STC Region 8 Director-Sponsor (1998-2001)

If you've not already received it, there's an STC membership renewal form in the mail with your name on it. The sooner you renew, the sooner you'll get your 2001 STC election ballot. You can't vote if you aren't a member, and the "polls" close in March, so don't be late with your renewal form.

Here's how it works. By mid-March, all members who renewed their membership before February 28 will receive a ballot. All you have to do is read the ballot statements of all the candidates, and vote! You'll be voting for a new Second Vice President who will, according to STC bylaws, go on to become First Vice President, then President, and then Immediate Past President. You'll also vote for a new STC Treasurer—who will serve a two-year term—and two of the four members of the STC Nominating Committee.

The part of the 2001 election that affects each of us and our chapters most directly, however, is the election of a new Region 8 Director-Sponsor. As we learned in November during the U.S. Presidential election, every vote DOES make a difference, and your new Director-Sponsor will be representing you for three years, so don't sit out this election! You have a difficult choice to make, as we have two excellent candidates: Alison Reynolds, from the New Zealand chapter, and Bonni Graham, from the San Diego chapter.

Alison Reynolds (formerly Sanders)

Alison Reynolds has been a technical communication educator at Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology in the South Island of New Zealand since 1995. Alison is a senior member of the New Zealand Chapter where she served as President and has been a com-

petition judge for the last five years. She has presented papers at the Annual Conference in Anaheim in 1998 and the Region 8 conference in San Ramon in 1998, as well as attending the Annual conference in Seattle in 1996. Alison was fortunate enough to meet STC members and attend chapter meetings in the San Francisco area in 1998. Alison has developed the only online technical communication qualification in Australia: the Graduate Diploma of Technical Communication. This was a pioneering adventure five years ago when online education was just beginning. She is developing an online course in usability testing and a degree in Information Design.

I asked Alison what special skills and perspectives she felt she would bring to the job of Region 8 Director-Sponsor. She said, "New Zealand is the last stop before the end of the world: it's famous for its flightless birds. I am not one of these; I know all about overcoming geographical isolation through networking and computer technology. I have built up strong links with local and international industries and academic institutions to support the growth of technical communication as a profession.

"As well as these links, I have been instrumental in placing students in employment in New Zealand and overseas. My online qualification is taught by linking lecturers, practitioners, and students from as far away as Russia, Canada, and the Pacific Islands. Recently I traveled to China with Prof. Carol Barnum to teach technical communication. I would like to use these strengths of building good rapport with academe and industry internationally to continue to promote the growth of the international recognition of technical communication as a pro-

fession and an academic discipline.

"I can also offer my academic skills to promote and link Region 8. I have completed research in building 'virtual communities' while keeping a human touch, and I am presently researching the current trends technical communication is taking in Australia and New Zealand. I am also an accomplished and experienced speaker on technical communication and cyberspace, and I'm used to trouble shooting from a distance."

When I asked Alison about her vision for Region 8 over the next three years, she said, "I'm very impressed by past Director-Sponsors' abilities to link regional members, organize STC business, be available when needed, answer those tricky questions, provide expert advice and direction, as well as their ability to be approachable and ensure a sense of enjoyment and community throughout the region. I would like to build on these solid foundations. I would like to use my strong international links and expertise to enrich and enable the growth of the international community that we have in Region 8."

Bonni Graham

Bonni Graham has spent 10 years as a practicing technical documenter. In 1994, she started Manual Labour, a technical documentation outsource provider. She has created manuals for clients like Sony, Kenwood USA, and Nissan North America (with Technical Standards). She is a Senior Member of the San Diego chapter, and in the past she started and managed the Southern California Unified Technical Publications, Art, and Online Competitions and managed a regional conference. Her most recent STC effort was serv-

► VOTE, Page 13

ing as the Deputy Chair for Region 8 for the Pan-Pacific Conference. She is currently the Chair for the International Technical Publications Competition. In her copious free time, she performs improvisational comedy with the Creative Urges.

When I asked Bonni about her special skills and perspectives, she said, "Being a positive person, I look for solutions and ignore finger-pointing and blame-finding. The more input I get from my region's members, the more effective a representative I can be—and I will actively seek out that input. My improvisational comedy experience enables me to present ideas persuasively and approach conflicts with humor.

"Working on several regional conferences, managing the new multi-chapter competitions in Southern California, and chairing the ITPC has given me experience working

with people from around the region and from all over the Society. I've had to manage conflicts, resolve issues, and bring geographically disparate teams together. This experience is excellent training for a position that serves the entire region."

I also asked Bonni what she thinks is the most pressing issue in the Region and how she might deal with it: "I think the most important issue facing our region is the changing status of our profession. In the years I've been a communicator, I've seen a significant shift in companies' understanding of the importance of what we do. This is not to say that the job is finished—we must continue to present ourselves and our skills as solutions to pressing business problems and positive contributions to the bottom line.

"I think we will see explosive growth in our field over the next

few years. Much like the Information Technology/Information Management profession was five years ago, we are poised on the brink of a revolution in visibility and status. I think as the importance of information grows, the importance of information providers and developers (i.e., us) will grow as well. We as a Society need to be ready to shape and foster that growth, and I hope to help Region 8 be at the forefront of this development."

Read your ballot statement for more information about the outstanding qualifications of these candidates. Region 8 can look forward to excellent leadership and representation during the next three years, and I'm certain that the Society can look forward to significant future contributions from either candidate—no matter what the election results. ■

Andrea Ames is Region 8 Director-Sponsor.

Silicon Valley Members Needed to Run for 2001-2002 Chapter Offices — Election in April

By Virginia Beecher

Are you interested in improving the quality and variety of Silicon Valley Chapter chapter programs and publications? Are you interested in participating in the decisions that affect how your STC membership dollars are spent?

The new leaders in the Silicon Valley Chapter administrative council take office every June. It will soon be time to run the Silicon Valley Chapter council election. Some current council members have announced intentions to run for reelection, but so far they are running unopposed, and some offices will be vacant. The elected council positions are:

President—runs the meetings and keeps things going smoothly, and generally makes things look easy

Vice president—amends the by-laws and runs special projects

Treasurer—keeps the books and writes the checks

Secretary—records the council meeting minutes and maintains chapter records

Programs manager—arranges monthly chapter meeting programs, workshops, and job fair (with a lot of volunteers!)

Regional activities and employment manager—runs the Employment Information committee and acts as the liaison with the Region 8 Conference committee and the Touchstone Northern California Technical Communication Competition committee

SIGs manager—acts as the liaison with the Silicon Valley Chapter SIG leaders

Membership and volunteers manager—tracks chapter membership and recruits volunteers for the chapter activities

Public relations manager—promotes chapter and regional activities internally and externally

To find out who the current council members are, please look on page 2 of *Connection*, or point your browser to the SVC chapter website at www.stc.org/region8/svc/www/infodir/svccontacts.htm.

Use the contact information there to contact your chapter council and find out what commitments each office requires and how you can help our chapter leaders and volunteers provide quality service to our membership.

If you are interested in running for office, please contact Virginia Beecher at (650) 853-0578, or virginia@idiom.com.

A ballot will arrive in your mailboxes in April and will include a list of candidates from which to choose your chapter leaders. Will your name be among the choices?

Virginia Beecher is the Silicon Valley Chapter's immediate past president and nominations manager. ■

“Tech writing is huge right now,” Benson said. “Lots of companies need writers who are extremely technical and who have exposure to code, and have done online documentation, created user manuals for all audiences, including developers and customers.” While technical writers are in demand, qualifications for jobs are increasing.

According to Davis, “The most successful writers in the Bay Area continue to be hired not because they’re great communicators (many aren’t) but because they’re knowledgeable about complex technologies.” Davis added that important technologies for tech writers in the next five years are:

- Wireless web technology (wireless access protocol [WAP])
- Transaction middleware/messaging/enterprise application integration (EAI)
- Customer relationship management (CRM) applications (for 2+ more years)
- Broadband network infrastructure technologies (optical networking)
- Bio-informatics (still emerging)

Fetisoff added some other tool skills, including:

- Documenting object-oriented applications programming interfaces (APIs)
- XML
- Creating code examples for developer ref doc in C++, Java, and JavaScript
- Programmer-level knowledge of databases and application-development tools
- Single-sourcing using a document-management system
- Defining and convincing clients to implement knowledge management
- Integrator-/network admin-level knowledge of high-end networking systems
- e-Learning (multimedia-enriched courseware development for the Web)

Conroy’s choice for the tool of the future is XML. “There’s nothing hotter than XML at the moment,” he said. “If you have technical knowledge of XML, you can up the ante in terms of salary and career advancement.”

The recruiters all substantively agreed on the baseline tools for

tech writers today:

- Adobe FrameMaker
- RoboHELP
- Quadralay WebWorks Publisher
- Macromedia Dreamweaver
- Adobe Photoshop
- Visio

This list assumes that technical writers know HTML because “No matter which authoring tool you use, you will always have to tweak your HTML code a little bit,” according to the respondents on frameusers.com. Adobe Acrobat and Exchange also popped up frequently in my job-site research.

So, I am signing up for some technology and Web classes ASAP. If you are interested in learning new technologies, check out handtech.com, which offers courses at very reasonable prices, or check area community colleges, state colleges, and university extensions for courses on the latest hot tools. ■

Merilyn Merkel is a FrameMaker specialist at Frost & Sullivan in San Jose, Calif.

Good Recruiters an Asset for Technical Writers

By Tom Lenzo

They go by many names including recruiter, head-hunter, and body snatcher. But good recruiters can be an asset to your career, no matter if you are a contractor or a permanent employee. They can help you find a job, tell you inside information about the hiring company, prepare you for interviews, help you negotiate salary, and put pressure on the company to decide while you are available.

During my professional career and as Employment Coordinator, I’ve worked with many recruiters. Here are some of my thoughts about them.

About Recruiters

First, there are no credentials for recruiters, nor is there an associa-

tion setting standards for them. Good recruiters can work through agencies or from their homes. But, since it is a low overhead business, some people work as recruiters part-time on the side.

Recruiters usually specialize in industries or job functions, and know those contents. Recruiters develop relationships with their clients. But when those clients call the agency, the rep might not be familiar with your resume, which means you’re going to have to do their work.

Recruiters get candidates from their databases of qualified candidates. They create those databases by knowing who’s who in the industry or profession they specialize in, by being active in that industry, and by cold calling.

What You Can Do

While networking is the best search strategy, get visible so you can get in the recruiters’ databases. Be active in various professional organizations, speak at conferences, and write for professional publications. Keep your resume up to date and in a format that can be scanned into the recruiters’ databases. When a recruiter calls you, ask if they have a specific job or if they are just collecting resumes.

- If they have a specific job order and you meet the requirements, ask for the placement time frame and an approximate salary: this will save both of you lots of time.

I'm also proud to introduce a re-designed *Connection*, whose readability and content has been enhanced through the tireless work of *Connection* Design and Graphics Editor Gayle Madden. The online newsletters will feature more color, graphics, photos, and, most importantly, relevant stories.

While we are excited about our redesigned newsletter and the fact that we have moved *Connection* online, we don't want to forget to mention the contents of this issue. This issue is devoted to the chapter's enormously popular job fair, which takes place March 22. We also have stories on FrameMaker 6, which drew the largest dinner crowd in five years in January, tool skills that are in most demand, and on the upcoming (chadless) SVC council elections. We also are introducing a monthly summary of the minutes from the council chapter meeting, which I hope will give you a better idea of what goes into keeping this dynamic chapter moving forward.

I appreciate the help of all chapter members who contributed relevant stories to this month's issue. Chapter President Guy Haas, Webmaster Margaret Jones, and council members also deserve praise for their support and help

in moving *Connection* online.

For those of you who are interested in printing mechanics and nuances, Madden explains some of her choices.

"We didn't pick anything particularly unusual, but instead chose fonts without fuss that would go the long haul.

"The sans serif headline font we chose was Gill Sans. This is a very legible font with classic lines, a common choice for ebooks. Eric Gill (1882-1940), an English engraver and stonemason, who created many serif fonts, designed it. This particular font is his only sans serif design. It makes a good online choice because there is no contrast between the thick and thin of each character's stroke. Other more romantic sans serif designs such as Bodoni have more interest in each character but would not be as suitable for electronic viewing. Gill Sans also has versatility built-in with a variety of styles designed into the font such as condensed, bold, and italic.

"For the body text we chose Gazette. Created at D. Stempel AG in 1977, Linotype's Gazette is a text typeface that was designed to withstand the rigors of high-speed newspaper presses and coarse

newsprint, and to guarantee legibility throughout long press runs. While we aren't making long run on coarse newsprint, this typeface appears more robust and substantial than say, Times.

"Gazette also has bold and italic styles designed into the font and don't rely on word processing software to make those adjustments artificially. We also bumped up the type size in anticipation of delivering the newsletter online."

While Madden will continue to concentrate on the readability of the newsletter, we'll work on presenting content that helps you do your job better. We also would like to remind you that we are the largest STC chapter in the world and have some of the most talented writers, editors, and graphic designers around. We could use your talent at the *Connection*. We welcome your help, whether it's stories, story ideas, graphics, photos or feedback.

Let us know what you think about the redesign and other newsletter issues. Email Managing Editor Joe Lowell at jdlowell@yahoo.com with your comments and concerns. ■

Joe Lowell is a technical writer for the TAC Web team at Cisco Systems.

Council Tackles Web Site Redesign, Annual Job Fair Plans

By Vicki Blodgett

The Silicon Valley Administrative Council took the following actions on Feb. 8, 2001, at the offices of PeopleSoft in Santa Clara, Calif.

- A newly formed ad hoc Web team is exploring designs, features we'd like, and features to avoid when it updates the chapter Web site.
- Chapter President Guy Haas published a flyer about volunteer opportunities at the January monthly meeting and distributed it to the chapter meeting.
- Program and Events Manager Emmah Smyth has meeting

programs arranged through July. Programs will include information on writing APIs, writing help for handhelds, and a writing basics program.

- Plans for the March Job Fair, International Roadshow, and meeting are progressing. Membership and Volunteer Manager Grace Pamidi is still recruiting volunteers.
- As of January 2001, the STC-SVC has 1,487 members. Total STC membership is 24,468.
- Plans continue to put the *Connection* newsletter online, starting with the March-April newsletter. The updated news-

letter design by Gayle Madden incorporates a new chapter logo.

- Immediate Past President and Nominations Manager Virginia Beecher is working on a slate for next year's council in preparation for the June election.
- Vickie Brown was named the Volunteer of the Month for January for consistently providing excellent HTML editing and reliable, on-time delivery of the employment listing for the SVC Web site. ■

Vicki Blodgett is the secretary of the Silicon Valley chapter of the STC.

Silicon Valley Chapter Membership Continues Growth

The following is a list of members who are new, or who have transferred in from other chapters, or who have had their membership reinstated in December and January.

New Members

Allen, Ken
Altman, Tracy A.
Ayres, Fred D
Boken, Annette L.
Bulat, Rosa
Comes, Craig S.
Cone, Eugene J.
Cook, Allison D.
Davidson, Loren
Davis, Jean M.
Davis, Phillip C.
Diaz, Carlos, A.
Dobbins, Lori E.
Doornbos, Daniel L.
Dunne, Kenis M.
Harvey, Antony M.
Heather, Robert W.

Heisch, Daniel W.
Jahde, Josef K.
Jensen, Eric R.
Lee, Susan T.
Levinson, Margie
Lichtenberg, Elizabeth
Malletta, Susan L.
McCathern, Helena E.
McConnachie, David W.
McKinney, Kevin A.
Millen, Patricia M.
Mueller, Diane Ely
Mynett, Richard G.
Naiman, Rachel S.
Naumann, Cordelia M.
Neugass, Henry
Ohumukini-Urness, Yvonne
Olatunji, Zawadi A.

Pascoe, Jackie
Petry, Diana M.
Renzel, Jennifer J.
Roberts, Rick David
Savoy, Margaret A.
Scott, Victoria R.M.
Seenarine, Shirmattie
Van Leuven, Dewane L.
Via, Nancy D.
Waldman, Marian G.
Wessling, Mary N.
West, Michael R.
Wills-Mook, Julia
Zick, Melissa E.

Reinstated Members

DePaolis, Brenda K.
Franks, Nick
O'Maley, Linda Kaye

Members Transferring In

Burroughs, Ernest T.
Cline, D.J.
Cornejo, Favio
Cross, Doris Isaac
Duciaume, Susan M.
Haggerty, Diane E.
McColly, Kelly P.
Peters, Rosemary A.
Phillips, Richard G.
Seedorf, Leticia B.
Snyder, Marc
Wallin, John D.

Connection Staff

Managing Editor:

Joe Lowell
(408) 853-6652
jdlowell@yahoo.com

Design and Graphics Editor:

Gayle Croissant-Madden
(650) 494-0575
gayle@airjam.com

Associate Editors:

Sara Tarr
Marilyn Merkel

Advertising Manager:

Ivan Linderman
(408) 378-5634
ivan@bkbytes.com

Production Notes

Connection is produced on Windows® and Macintosh® platforms with a combination of the following software:

Adobe® PageMaker®
Adobe Photoshop®
Microsoft Word®

The newsletter is set in the following fonts:

Gill Sans®
Gazette®

FEEDBACK

Do you have gripes or praise for *Connection* content or production? Please email the editor, Joe Lowell, jdlowell@yahoo.com.

◀ RECRUITERS, Page 14

- If they are asking for information that's clearly on the resume you've already sent to that recruiter or their firm, they haven't read it and you're going to have to do their work.
- If they are collecting resumes, ask them to tell you about other technical writing jobs they've filled and for referrals of technical writers they've placed. Ask about their tenure and experience as recruiter. If you don't want them to represent you to certain companies, say so.
- Ask the recruiter where they got your name or who referred you to them. React to their answer as you feel appropriate.

Develop a relationship with recruiters, even if you don't need a job or they don't have a job for you when they call. Get to know them and their needs. Send them updated resumes, help them understand your industry and what you do, and refer them to companies and candidates to them. Networking with recruiters will work to your advantage when you need a job. ■

Tom Lenzo is a retired STC-San Gabriel Valley Chapter Employment Coordinator. This article was reprinted from Quill & Disk, the San Gabriel Valley, Calif., chapter newsletter.



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