

SuperScript is the official newsletter of the Alberta Community of the Society for Technical Communication and is published 10 times a year. The editors welcome submissions and advertising that will be of interest to our members. If you have an idea for an article or if you have an advertising enquiry, please contact us.



President's Message

Jessie Channey, President

October was full of adventure for STC Alberta!

Our Past President Lucille went on an exotic hike in Peru and senior member Jeanne Gonnason went to China! Look for Jeanne's article in an upcoming issue of SuperScript.

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students, and from employers to job seekers. [Read more ...](#)

New Heights news

Mellissa Ruryk, New Heights Coordinator

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STC Edmonton Kick-off: Mirth & Fiction (the important bits are true!)

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[Read more ...](#)



So you want to be a contractor...

Mellissa Ruryk, Workshops Coordinator

Mr. Perlin, this year's New Heights presenter, will also present a two-hour lecture on "So you want to be a contractor" focussed on surviving as a freelance writer. Due to a special arrangement with him, STC-AB is proud and excited to announce that Neil will give this lecture twice - once in Calgary (Wednesday, April 15) and once in Edmonton (Thursday, April 23)! Ticket pricing hasn't been set yet so again, watch the STC-AB email for more details.

Watch this space for more news as we finalize content and our plans. Interested parties can [send me an email](#) and I can let them know directly when PayPal is ready for us.

It's time to renew your membership!

Susan Burton, CAE, STC Executive Director

Use the convenience of the STC website to renew your membership for 2009 any time between now and the end of December. Renewing online with your credit card is easy and fast. (Or, if you prefer, you can download a PDF invoice from the website and pay by check through the mail.) As you renew, please take a moment to review your member record to update your address or to adjust your preferences.

If it's been a while since you visited our website (www.stc.org), I invite you to stop by to learn more about the new benefits added this year and the numerous other advantages that come with membership, many of which are available only to members.

In tough economic times like these, it's good to know you can count on your association to continue to increase the value of your membership. We want you to consider STC your professional home.

Come to MRC Communications Portfolio Evening – Dec. 3!

Mount Royal College
Electronic Publishing and Technical Communication Graduates

portfolio show 2008

Free Admission. Refreshments and live entertainment.

Art Central, 100-7th Ave. SW, Calgary

Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2008

RSVP by Dec 1st to jpall944@mymrc.ca 6 PM - 8 PM

**PORTFOLIO
SHOWCASE
2008**
Communicate. Create. Evolve.



Program for Calgary Council for Advanced Technology (<http://www.ccat.org>)

Serene Cheung, MASC P.Eng, Manager Research and Development, Tax Deloitte & Touche LLP

You're invited to attend programs at the CCAT. Find out what's ahead in all kinds of fields!

Date	Event	Venue	Topic
11/19/2008	ARC Breakfast	Alberta Research Cou...	The Future of Transportation
12/4/2008	Christmas Event	Chicago Chophouse - ...	The Future of Entrepreneurship
1/21/2009	Dinner Event	Calgary Zoo	The Future of Energy
2/5/2009	No Cost	Calgary Technologies...	Annual Technology Trade Show
2/18/2009	Breakfast	Alberta Research Cou...	The Future of the Internet
3/18/2009	Breakfast Event	Voodoo	The Future of Gaming
4/15/2009	Breakfast Event	Ward at 21 Century	The Future of Health Care
5/20/2009	Breakfast Event	TBD	The Future of Micro Sustainability
6/17/2009	BBQ	TBD	The Future of Bar-B-Q'ing

How is the economic slowdown affecting the IT industry?

[Read this short article](#) from the Project Management Institute's Voices on Project Management to learn about the slowdown and what some companies are suggesting is the solution.

"A deadline is negative inspiration. Still, it's better than no inspiration at all."

Rita Mae Brown, writer and activist

The next SuperScript deadline is December 12. All I want for Christmas is a sack of SuperScript submissions landing in my email box! Articles, quips, tips, news about news groups, photos, discussion topics ... pass along whatever you think might be of interest to the STC community.

Please send submissions to Carmen at newsletter@stc-alberta.org.

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The Alberta Chapter newsletter, *SuperScript*, is published ten times a year, with double issues in December/January and July/August. *SuperScript* presents feature articles from inside the Chapter and out, program and events calendar, profiles, tips and tricks to improve your skills, and important contact information. [Contact our SuperScript Editor](#), with any comments, stories, technical tips, book reviews, advertisements, or questions. [>> Previous editions.](#)

November 2008

President's Message

Jessie Channey, President, STC Alberta

October was full of adventure for STC Alberta!

Our Past President Lucille went on an exotic hike in Peru and senior member Jeanne Gonnason went to China! Look for Jeanne's article in an upcoming issue of *SuperScript*.

Locally, STC Alberta attended the Technology Showcase at Calgary Technologies on October 30th. Lucille Worone and I hosted a booth on the second floor and met with lots of interesting folks ranging from business owners to students, and from employers to job seekers. The venue was buzzing with speakers pitching their products at the speakers' stage and people moving from booth to booth. The jazz band created a lively mood and there were hors d'ouvres and wine/drinks for everyone. The event was well attended with several of our STC members stopping by to say hello.

On November 15, our 2008 Salary Survey closed with 122 responses! That's a record 60% response rate with last year being just a little over 50%. Thanks to everyone who participated in this critical survey. Look for the results to be published in our January issue of *SuperScript*.

Are short term volunteer commitments ideal for your ever-changing schedule? Why not become a newsletter editor? Try it out for three months: It's a three hour a month commitment to email members for articles, collect the articles, edit them, and forward them to our webmaster. That's all! Would you rather be more involved with creating the final output? Our webmaster creates the newsletter you're reading now and would love to show you how it's done. Email me for more information. Our thanks to Carmen Wyatt and Lori Robertson who have been putting together these newsletters on time every month: Job well done!

Mark your calendars for New Heights on April 17, 2009. The topic will be using MadCap Flare as a CMS to single source Help with DITA. There will be only 25 spots for highly anticipated and renowned speaker Neil Perlin. Hint: Make sure your STC membership is up to date!

Do you remember Mellissa Ruryk taking an email survey on what topics interest our members the most? Well luck is on our side because while Mr. Perlin is visiting us, he will present a topic that most of us voted for in Mellissa's survey; "So You Want to be a Consultant" will be presented in both Calgary and Edmonton. Mr. Perlin is the

perfect presenter for such a topic because he has been running his own business, Hyper/Word Services for 14 years. Stay tuned for more information on this exciting program!

Don't forget to renew your STC membership! As an STC member you have access to the "Members Only" resources on the stc.org website which includes global jobs and salary databases, the membership directory, and an online version of Intercom magazine.

STC Edmonton Kick-off: Mirth & Fiction (the important bits are true!)

Rick Paisley, STC Member

"Christmas is nigh", as evidenced by the 4-foot stacks of Christmas booty inside the 2nd Cup. "But it's only the 27th of October," I thought.

Too early. But a fine time to kick off the '08-'09 Edmonton STC season.

Nine, we gathered, to chit and chat, discuss the age-old definition and re-definition of Angela's troublesome word of last year, "bonk" and set sail plans for the year ahead.



L to R: Roy, Jenny, Deanne, Hugh, Angela, Diane, Serena, Rick, and Roger.

After a round table of introductions, and an impromptu discussion of online help systems, Jenny, on a whim, goaded some poor fellow at an adjoining table to stand, as best he could, on his chair - one of those thick cushiony types. "I dare you," she said plainly, pointing at his chair. He didn't budge. Still pointing, she said "I double dare you and call into question your masculine ability to recite the lines from the bridge scene in Monty Python's Holy Grail."

". . . while hopping up and down on one foot," added Roger.

He took the bait and climbed on his chair. But refused to hop.

Being of a practical sort, we promptly handed him a camera, and he took our group's picture as he rapidly shifted his weight hither and thither to avoid plummeting into the abyss. And further goading.

The door prizes, each drawn by a different attendee, went to Serena, the fashionably late Diane, and Deanne. Each received a 2nd Cup certificate. Chapters certificates went to Rick and Hugh. On what they'll spend; they don't know what to do.

Not to be left out, still sore from the re-discussion of bonking, and a lack of prizes, I'm sure, Angela started drawing, in beauty-pageant fashion, the runners up. Or, as she put it, "Loser #3 . . . Loser #2 . . . Loser #1." I don't know how she fared in this. I think

it was rigged. (The guy at the next table came in 3rd.)

We then had a spirited round of volunteering. Each other. Being the only one who had brought a note pad, I was noisily volunteered to write this article. Completely drowned out, in fact. Jenny, while chewing a cookie, was then volunteered to host this year's Christmas social. Serena to create a Facebook page for Edmonton STC members. Diane to do a talk on DITA in the New Year. And Roy, perhaps, a talk on the online help creation tool he uses (a unique one; German; the name escapes me). He was the only one who was wise enough not to be doing something when he was volunteered. And we were too played out to drown any objections. (The fellow at the next table who'd ventured out for an evening at the local 2nd Cup? To lounge and relax? To sit and serenely watch the world go by? He'd silently fled while we were volunteering Serena.)

The Christmas Social is tentatively scheduled for 16-Dec. Deanne Wilson, our new Edmonton Liaison extraordinaire, will send details as the time approaches.

The Facebook page for STC members residing in the Edmonton region is at: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=43868829125>

Thanks Serena! You were quick to get this done. Very quick. (And are now firmly entrenched at the top of the list to be volunteered for something at the Christmas social.)

Details of other events and programs in Edmonton will roll out as the season progresses.

Christmas is approaching. Good tidings to all.

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Seminar Topic : Topic-based, Structured Writing for Single Sourcing



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as a CMS to single source Help with DITA. This will be a hands-on, practical session with Neil Perlin of Hyperword Services, from Tewksbury, Maine presenting.

The price is only \$200 before the early bird deadline and \$250 after that. But with attendance capped at 25, people should make a point of registering early! We will, as usual, offer a 10% discount for STC-AB members who come from out of town to attend. Registration will be open shortly, watch the STC-AB email for an announcement.

About the Speaker: Neil Perlin has 29 years of experience in technical communication, with 23 in training, consulting, and development for various online formats and tools including WinHelp, HTML Help, CE Help, JavaHelp, WebHelp, RoboHelp, ForeHelp, and Flare. Neil is a columnist and frequent speaker for STC, IEEE PCS, and other professional groups. He is a member of STC's Boston chapter, the creator and manager of the Beyond the Bleeding Edge stem at STC's annual conference, and an Associate Fellow of STC. Through his company Hyper/Word Services, Neil provides training, consulting, and development for online help and documentation, for various MadCap products, and for structured authoring.

For more information or to pre-register, contact [Mellissa Ruryk](#).

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STC Alberta Activities

Check out our [Programs](#), [Workshops](#), [Coffee Nights](#), [Administrative Meetings](#), and [Social Events](#) for an opportunity to meet & greet, learn a tool or skill, or further develop your technical and writing expertise.

The calendar shown below outlines upcoming Alberta Chapter events. These events, unless otherwise stated, are held in Calgary. Please see our [Edmonton](#) page for a listing of "Upcoming Events" in that city.

2009 Upcoming Events

February 18	Dr.Explain Demonstration . Dr.Explain is an automated help authoring tool for creating RTF files, CHM files, HTML help, on-line manuals, and printable documentation; help files for software applications, including Java and Flash applications, almost automatically. Craig Prichard will demonstrate how to utilize this product for your help ware needs. Learn more ...
April 17	Using Madcap Flare as a Content Management test bed while learning about topic-based, structured writing for single sourcing. Speaker: Neil Perlin Learn more ...

Throughout the year, STC Alberta presents a wide variety of opportunities to learn, share and to become involved in the field of technical communication. Through workshops, social events and regular meetings we endeavour to:

- Present the latest information regarding theory and practice of technical communication
- Provide opportunities to learn and experiment with new tools and techniques
- Open up opportunities to network by meeting and exchanging ideas with fellow STC members
- Provide on-the-job training and opportunities to share your skills through our mentoring program.

Register in advance for all Programs and Workshops through our [online registration page](#).

Note: When space is limited, preference is given to current STC members.



Last updated: December 16, 2008