

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

Our evening at Ceili's was more than a success. It was fantastic! The energy, enthusiasm, and attendance were unprecedented! Many thanks to everyone who came and enjoyed the buzz of an excited group of techies. The large group was filled with contractors and full-timers, students and spouses, and even a visitor from the STC Toronto chapter.

The drinks were flowing and the appetizers were plenty thanks to the staff at Ceili's. From talks of travels to comparing corporate perks, no topic was left untouched that evening – including volunteerism. We had several enthusiastic volunteers step forward to participate in this year's activities. I'd like to officially welcome two of them: Serene Cheung is our Vice President, and Carolyn Yates is our Public Relations Coordinator. [Read on.](#)

New Heights news

Mellissa Ruryk, New Heights Coordinator

Announcing the New Heights Seminar for April 17, 2009!

Join STC Alberta in Calgary for a full day with Neil Perlin. We'll use Madcap Flare as a Content Management test bed while learning about topic-based, structured writing for single sourcing! If we added any more content to this seminar, something would burst! But Neil is just the presenter who can tie all this information together into a cohesive, informative and truly useful workshop that will be - easily - worth twice the price you'll pay as an STC member.

[Read on](#) for more information and how to register.

New members

Linda Chadwick, Membership Coordinator

Here is the list of new chapter members who joined in September:

- Dan MacLean (transfer in) - Red Deer
- Serene Cheung (new community member) - Calgary
- Anne Adharsingh (new community member) - Calgary

An invitation from Indiana

Amanda Cross, President, STC Indiana Chapter

On October 27, the Indiana chapter will be holding our program meeting: we'll have a panel of four experts in corporate blogging to talk about the power of the medium.

The reason this matters to you is because all of the Indiana chapter program meetings are available for free online to everyone everywhere. You don't have to dial in, download any software, or give away your personal information. We broadcast the meetings live using a podcasting site called TalkShoe.com. Additionally, we record the meetings so you can listen to them later.

Go to <http://stc-indiana.org> for the specifics on the meeting and our expert panel. While you're there, scroll all the way down to the bottom and click the Play button on the TalkShoe widget to check out last month's presentation by Scott Abel. You can even click through the slides right from the same page to follow along.

Tell your friends, and I hope you're listening in on 10/27.

A different kind of invitation from Pittsburg

Bryce Walat, STC Pittsburgh President

Recently, I've heard other STC members talking about the economy, especially the rising cost of fuel, food, health care, and other necessities, and the falling value of their homes and investments. For some STC members, their membership in STC is a prime candidate for an "extra" item to cut from their personal or professional budgets. You may be thinking about not renewing your membership in STC when it expires, or if you aren't a current member, you may be having second thoughts about joining STC. If you still plan to renew or join STC, you may also be thinking about cutting back on meetings or events.

Before you decide not to renew or join STC, or skip a meeting you'd like to attend, I'd like to ask you this question: Over your lifetime, what is your most valuable and biggest asset?

- Your home
- Your education
- Your career
- Your retirement plan

[Read on](#) for the answer!

Wanted: shiny new SuperScript Editor

Carmen Wyatt, SuperScript Editor

Due to some twists and turns in my career path, I'm going to be saying goodbye to the position of SuperScript Editor as of January 1, 2009. As a result, I'm on the lookout for someone to fill

my fairly petite but functional shoes. Being SuperScript Editor generally involves commitment of about 2-3 hours per month, depending on how much content comes in for each issue.

What does the SuperScript Editor do, you ask? For each issue, the Editor sends a reminder to STC members and executive that the deadline is looming and content is required. The next step is to edit the submissions that come in and put them in a format so our Web Master can post it on the website and create the e-mail newsletter/contents index. Then the Editor sends SuperScript out to members via the announce list. The Editor can also take the opportunity to submit his or her own contributions.

Please take advantage of this opportunity to contribute to STC Alberta Chapter! I'll be happy to show you the ropes! Please [contact me](#) or 403-297-1156 if you're interested, or contact [Jessie Channey](#).

The deadline for the next SuperScript is November 14. Please send submissions to [Carmen](#).

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SOCIETY FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

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](#).

October 2008

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Calgary Technologies Inc (CTI) is having a tech showcase and open house on October 30. Since STC Alberta holds its monthly executive meetings there (as well as several other events throughout the year), we will be setting up an exhibit alongside the other companies whose offices are at CTI.

Last year's president Lucille Worone, this year's president Jessie Channey, and our Membership Coordinator Linda Chadwick will be hosting the exhibit, as this is a great chance to promote the profession and network with people from the tech sector.

Come out and visit our booth on the second floor and check out the open house, listen to the speakers, and enjoy the jazz band and the food and drinks. For more information, see the [CTI website](#).

And don't forget to [fill out the Salary Survey](#).

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rising cost of fuel, food, health care, and other necessities, and the falling value of their homes and investments. For some STC members, their membership in STC is a prime candidate for an "extra" item to cut from their personal or professional budgets. You may be thinking about not renewing your membership in STC when it expires, or if you aren't a current member, you may be having second thoughts about joining STC. If you still plan to renew or join STC, you may also be thinking about cutting back on meetings or events.

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- Your retirement plan

Answer: Your career is your biggest and most important asset. Your career gives you the income to get the necessities of life, such as food, clothing, and shelter, and also to get an education, real estate, a retirement plan, and other investments and assets. When you think about how much of your time every day you spend working and how much of your lifetime is spent working, you can see why your career is so important. That's why it's important to manage your career well.

STC helps you manage your career by helping you to:

- Launch your technical communication career or transition into a technical communication career
- Learn new skills and enhance existing ones
- Find opportunities to network with fellow technical communication professionals
- Find a new job or a better job
- Launch an independent technical communication career
- Find help when you need it
- Improve your "soft" skills, such as public speaking or team-building skills

The cost of STC membership is "chump change" compared to the value it adds to your career. For example, STC's free or low-cost articles, seminars, and conferences give you knowledge and skills to not only keep up with changes in the fast-paced technical communication field, but also get ready for the technical communication jobs of the future.

On a personal note, I've now been through four "career transitions" in my eight years as a technical communicator. In some cases, they occurred because of circumstances beyond my control, such as economic conditions; in others, there were things that I could have done or not done that might have led to a different outcome. In every case, I found STC to be a helpful resource to manage these transitions. STC proved valuable as a go-to for technical communication job leads, ways to improve my technical and interpersonal skills, and just to know that I wasn't alone in my career transition. STC Pittsburgh's WorkQuest was, as the MasterCard slogan goes, priceless. Also, in every case, employers and potential employers noticed my membership in STC on my resume, and some even knew of me from STC.

As President of STC Pittsburgh, part of my job is promoting the chapter and the Society, and I wrote this column as a way to promote STC and to make a case that

STC is more important to your career in times like these. But I also wrote it to explain how STC helped me and why I joined STC. With that in mind, if you join or renew your membership in November, you'll receive two months free, because your membership won't expire until the end of 2009. Visit stc.org to join or renew. Also, ask me about membership, because not only am I STC Pittsburgh's President, I'm also a member!

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



Announcing the New Heights Seminar for April 17, 2009!

Join STC Alberta in Calgary for a full day with **Neil Perlin**. We'll use Madcap Flare as a Content Management test bed while learning about topic-based, structured writing for single sourcing! If we added any more content to this seminar, something would burst! But Neil is just the presenter who can tie all this information together into a cohesive, informative and truly useful workshop that will be - easily - worth twice the price you'll pay as an STC member.

Early bird pricing is \$200 for STC-AB members and \$250 for non-STC-AB members. We will again offer a 20% discount for out of town attendees to defray the cost of travelling to Calgary, our only venue.

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 Hyper/Word Services of Tewksbury, MA, Neil provides training, consulting, and development for online help and documentation, for various MadCap products, and for structured authoring.

Attendance is capped at 25 people for this unique, hands-on experience. Register early, and don't be disappointed!

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.

2008 / 2009 Upcoming Events

**April 17,
2009**

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.