



2003-2004 Annual Report



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2003-2004 Rosters

Administrative Council

Executive	
President	Ken Schatzke
Vice President	Gord Douglas
Secretary	Sandra Law
Treasurer	Gary Ten-Hove
Past President	Ian Hawkins
Events	
Programs	Linda Robson Laura Swainson
Workshops	Karen Reid
Coffee Nights	Kathy Gerritsen
Registration and Hospitality	Carey Fougere
Special Events	
2003 Region 7 Conference	Brian O'Malley
Operations	
Membership/E-mail Lists	Frances Clarke Micki Kosman
Mentorship	Kristie Sinclair
Archive	Kelly Hendrickson
Communications	
<i>SuperScript</i>	Jessie Channey (Team Lead) Jean Bauer Robin Bly Andrea Hogg Rosemary Reed
Web Site/Jobline	Ian Hawkins
Public Relations	Nancy Sequeira (Team Lead) Natashia Menezes Helen Schleedoorn Theresa Tremaine

Edmonton	
Liaison/Programs	Mala Rupnarain
Mount Royal College	
Faculty Liaison	Glenn Ruhl
Student Liaison	Libby Graham Sherrie Richards

Mount Royal College Scholarship and Award Winners

Scholarship	Natashia Menezes
Award (Year 1)	Sherry Willets
Award (Year 2)	Deirdre O’Riain
Award (Year 3)	Libby Graham
Award (Year 4)	Sandra Sterling-Weicker

Year in Review

Ken Schatzke
President

The 2003-2004 year proved to be a challenging but also rewarding one for our Chapter.

We began the year by hosting one of our most successful events, the 2003 Region 7 Conference. The conference was a tremendous achievement, bringing technical communicators from across Region 7 and elsewhere to our province for three days of learning and networking. Most were impressed with the quality and organization of the event, which was a result of the conference volunteers' efforts over the past year and a half.

The conference was one of the largest undertakings we have taken on as a Chapter. And with it behind us, we set our sights on the remainder of the year.

From November to June, we held our standard slate of events, including programs, workshops, coffee nights, the pub night in January, and the AGM in June. For the first time, the Vice President chaired the team responsible for these events. This arrangement added a new, interesting portfolio to the VP position, while reducing some of the demands on the President.

We also continued to provide services to our members, including the membership, mentorship, archives, and the jobline.

As the year came to a close, we began to look to our future. We held a referendum on changes to the bylaws. We had held a similar referendum last year but were unable to pass it because we did not receive the number of votes necessary for quorum. This year, however, we did receive the number of votes necessary and the bylaws passed as a result.

If the bylaws are the foundation of the Chapter, the events and services we provide to our members are the frame. Therefore, we held a town hall in May to ask you, our members, how to improve and expand upon these events and services. In 2004-2005, we will use this information in our re-chartering, a process that the STC is asking all chapters and special interest groups to complete to define their value to members.

As 2003-2004 comes to a close, I am confident in the structure that we have built. It is strong because of the work of our council and numerous volunteers. However, no structure is complete without people. This will be a major focus of 2004-2005 and beyond. All of us need to take advantage of and support the great organization we have created over the years.



Otherwise, we risk losing this home for technical communication in Alberta. It's our Chapter, our profession, and our shared responsibility.

Finances

Gary Ten-Hove
Treasurer

<u>Opening Balance:</u>	<u>\$19,841.86</u>
Income:	39,126.32
<u>Expenses:</u>	<u>34,546.71</u>
<u>Net Income (Loss):</u>	<u>4,579.61</u>
Closing Balance:	\$24,421.47

The income included \$6,862.12 profit from the conference and \$8,522.46 from dues.

The most notable expenses were a \$4,000 scholarship for MRC and a \$2,000 loan repayment for the conference.

Membership

Micki Kosman

Membership Coordinator

As of May 31, 2004, we had 200 members in our Chapter. It is the fourth consecutive time we have ended the year with 200 or more members. Our Chapter members reside predominantly in Calgary, a significant portion reside in Edmonton or elsewhere.

- Calgary members: 138
- Edmonton members: 41
- The remaining 21 members come from St. Albert, Nisku, Spruce Grove, Saskatoon, Regina, Okotoks, Redwood Meadows, Fort Saskatchewan, Yellowknife, Sundre, Lethbridge, and High River.

Most of our members hold regular memberships. However, we have a significant number of senior members, who have belonged to the STC for five or more years, and a number of student members.

Notably, Brian O'Malley was named the Alberta Chapter's first associate fellow in 2004. Our membership is broken down as follows:

- Regular members: 100
- Senior members: 79
- Student members: 20
- Associate fellow: 1

The Society for Technical Communication's Web site allows online membership applications, renewals, and address updates. If your contact information changes during the year, please update it at http://www.stc.org/address_change.asp. To log in and complete the form, you need your STC membership number, which you can find on your membership card or the mailing label of either *Intercom* magazine or *Technical Communication* journal.

Thank you to all of our members for making the past year another successful one for our Chapter.

Events

Linda Robson, Laura Fortems, Karen Reid
Program and Workshop Coordinators

The following is a summary of the events held in Calgary during
2003-2004:

Date	Topic	Presenter
Nov. 13 (Prog.)	Highlights of the Region 7 Conference	Gord Douglas, Ian Hawkins, Ken Schatzke
Feb. 19 (Prog.)	Building Long Distance Teams	Kathy Legg
Feb. 28 (WS)	Introducing to Adobe FrameMaker	Cheryl Dumba
Mar. 18 (Prog.)	The Design Element and Its Impact on Documentation	Glenn Ruhl
Mar. 27 (WS)	Concepts in Web Site Design and Usability	Milena Radzikowska
Apr. 15 (Prog.)	Taking the Steps to Start Your Own Business	Sara Eaton
May 20 (Prog.)	Town Hall – Successes and Suggestions for Improvement	Moderated by Ken Schatzke
Prog. = Program		
WS = Workshop		

For information on events in Edmonton, see page 13.

SuperScript

Jessie Channey

SuperScript Team Lead

As 2003-2004 comes to a close, we take the time to look back and reflect on yet another year filled with fun and challenging times. The year had an easy start with the same team staying on: Andrea, Jean, Rosemary, and Jessie committed themselves to another year of producing *SuperScript*. In January, Jean took her final bow before moving on to the bigger challenges of parenting. To help fill the gap, Robin joined us in producing our award-winning newsletter.

Our biggest accomplishments this year, aside from putting together 10 great issues, included the following:

- **Streamlining the development process.** We revised our process documents to improve newsletter development and to ease replication for present and future team members.
- **Advertising guidelines on the Web.** These guidelines were created in 2002-2003 and they've since been placed on the Alberta Chapter Web site for quick and easy access. Thanks for our Webmaster Ian for making this possible.
- **Newsletter survey.** Jean spearheaded the effort of putting out a survey in 2003, which was successful with almost 40 respondents providing us with valuable feedback. One of her final contributions to the team was to compile the results which will be posted in a future issue.

Since the production process created in 2001 worked so well, we continued with it: submissions to the newsletter@stc-alberta.org inbox were received by the 20th of the month. The Editors, taking turns working on the layout and editing, began the crazy production pace after the 20th. The Layout Editor would send a draft to the Copy Editor, make the changes, and send it to the President for his review and approval. The Editor would then set up all the links in the PDF, and send the final PDF to our Web Posting Editor, Rosemary Reed, who was responsible for posting the PDF to our Web site. With a lot of dedication, a little bit of panic, and the occasional jaw-clenching moments that come with the territory, we managed to release the newsletter during the first week of each month.

Thanks to a hardworking Editorial team, timely submissions from our Administrative Council, and our readers, we received an **Award of Merit** for our newsletter for the third consecutive year. This year's issues contained many great articles including program and workshop reports,



and our regular feature, *Bitter Ink*, created by our cartoonist, Jeremy Schroeder, who has generously shared his talent with us since 2000.

Working on the newsletter has been such a worthwhile and rewarding experience, that Jessie has decided to stick around for a fifth term, and Rosemary will stay on for her third. Andrea and Robin will be leaving us, however, and we'd like to thank them for their hard work. It was a pleasure to work with a team of professionals who not only know how to get the job done, but how to do it as good-natured team players.

Finally, we'd like to thank the STC for a great year. We look forward to providing you with more interesting and informative newsletters in the coming year!

Jobline

Ian Hawkins

Webmaster and Jobline Coordinator

Nearly 40 positions by over 30 different companies and agencies were advertised on the Jobline during 2003-2004. This number is about 30% higher than last year's totals.

The postings were evenly divided between contract positions and permanent positions. This is a change from last year, when most of the positions were contracts of varying lengths.

Most of the jobs were for Calgary, with a few in the Edmonton area. At least one was overseas (Qatar), and a couple were telecommuting opportunities.

The number of postings increased substantially in the spring, so we can hope that the trend continues into the next year.

As in previous years, the majority of positions were for IT companies, often related to the oil patch. We also had some requests for trainers and course developers, and medical writers.

Most of the postings requested previous experience, though there were a few entry-level positions available as well. The most requested skills were MS Word, MS Office, Adobe FrameMaker and RoboHelp. Adobe Acrobat and Corel Draw were also in demand.

Edmonton

Mala Rupnarain
Edmonton Liaison

Administrative Summary

This year's focus was on providing members with some more educational content as requested in the previous year. Presentations were held once every two months and delivered by current STC members in Edmonton. We also developed alliances with the U of A User Experience Group, Editors' Association, and the Edmonton chapter of the Canadian Women in Communications Group. Events were cross-promoted and members across all groups were encouraged to attend.

I continued developing a relationship with Grant MacEwan Community College (downtown and west end campuses) and the students in their Professional Writing program. I set up an STC booth at the "Get Publishing Conference" at the Market Exhibit, explaining the many benefits of joining our group to new graduates and students. Lucille Mazo, an instructor with the Professional Writing program, has served us as an unofficial liaison by announcing our various events in class and encouraging students to take advantage of the great networking opportunities and participate in our Society. While the relationship is still in its initial stages, it may lay the groundwork for growth in our Society as enrollment in the Professional Writing program increases. Lucille expects that there will be a significant percentage of students specializing in technical writing, with potential for our membership numbers to increase.

Program Summary

In November, Theresa Agnew, Manager of Grant MacEwan's "The Writing Works," gave a presentation on the Editors' Association and a variety of classes available to technical writers for professional development. She also invited members to submit their resumes for various teaching positions.

In January, Lorraine Butchart delivered a presentation on a Beginner's Guide to XML. This was a popular and well-received event held at the Intuit office. Dean Hamp, Documentation Manager at Intuit, has kindly offered the use of Intuit facilities for future events, including a possible intercity AGM.

In March, Lucille Mazo gave another well-attended presentation on Instructional Design, Needs Assessment, and Technical Writing. Lucille

gave us pointers on different learning styles and examples of training materials used to accommodate each style.

Attendance and Membership Summary

Attendance was high at all our meetings, averaging between 16 and 20 people. This is a definite improvement over last year's numbers, in part due to the popularity of our presentation topics, more suitable schedules, and the new attendee incentive program that I planned (a.k.a. door prizes and attendance contest). While some members relocated and transferred membership, we were also privileged enough to have some new members join, while others renewed their membership after a "lapse" period.

Social Events

Our season started with a casual dinner and ended with a casual dessert get together. We awarded our best attendees with a nice collection of prizes to show appreciation for their support of their Society during this past year. These events are usually well attended as our members do enjoy having a social component to catch up and visit with peers.

Volunteers for 2003-2004

For the second year in a row, I managed tasks in Edmonton as the Programs Coordinator and Liaison. This entailed scheduling meetings, booking venues for meetings, developing a meeting format, making a "call" for presenters, encouraging participation amongst students, members, and non-members, starting a relationship between college instructors and the Society, answering questions about the STC and what we do from prospective members, distributing job ads from local headhunters and STC members, regularly contributing content to the newsletter, updating the Web site, and contacting members via e-mail notification for various events and volunteer opportunities.

I made several attempts during this season to recruit volunteers for workshops, AGM duties, and survey help, but it proved to be a difficult task.

However, I successfully recruited three new volunteers to continue as Programs Coordinator and Liaisons for the next season. I will be mentoring them to make the transition as seamless as possible. In an informal handbook, I've documented various tasks and created some guidelines for the new volunteers on how to make the most of their



positions and enjoy these incredible opportunities to contribute to their Society.