

The CAPITAL LETTER



Society for Technical Communication
Sacramento Chapter Newsletter

September 2007

A Smorgasbord of Skills

Hello readers. Summer's beating a hasty retreat. I hope you all managed to sneak some down time.

We've got a great meeting lined up for this month. Karl Palachuk will be presenting his "Relax, Focus, Succeed" (RFS) program. Karl is an author, technology consultant, and professional trainer. He developed his RFS program (and wrote a book about it) to emphasize the role of balance in personal success. Learn more about Karl at his site: www.relaxfocussucceed.com, and come to the meeting to hear it in person (page 11).

The 2007 Kenneth Gordon Scholarship has been awarded to two students enrolled in San Francisco State University's Technical and Professional Writing Program. The sponsors of the 2007-08 Northern California Technical Communication Competition are now accepting submissions. Entrance information is on page 12.



Our chapter is seeking replacement speakers for the October and November meetings. Thanks to our VP of Programs, and acting president, Ken Umbach, for his tireless efforts in keeping the slate full. Ken raises some interesting points in his (acting) President's Letter this month, concerning the variety of professional interests and skills among our membership, and the challenges of serving them

all. See page 3 for more on that.

We've got several book reviews this month. Read about how to plan and build your own PC, learn what it takes to design and maintain networks, get a grasp of the fundamentals of software testing, and take a tour of a free, but powerful content management system. Reviews begin on page 4.

Congratulations to Willow Valley Press (WVP) on the publication of "Dandelion Through the Crack -- The Sato Family Quest for the American Dream." WVP is the newly formed subsidiary of Willow Valley Software, with which most of you are already familiar. With this step they build on the aforementioned diversity of interests, skills, and accomplishments of our membership.

See you at the meeting!

Chris Masotti, Editor



SOCIETY FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

About The Capital Letter

The Capital Letter is published ten times a year, September through June, by the Sacramento Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication. Subscriptions are available to nonmembers for \$10 per year. Advertising rates are \$30 per quarter page.

We welcome letters to the editor, articles, and information regarding meetings, workshops, and courses pertaining to technical communication. Please submit in MS Word or plain text format. Articles may be edited as necessary for content and length. The deadline for submission is the 1st of each month for the following month's issue. Send submissions to the Managing Editor, Chris Masotti, chritti@sbcglobal.net or mail to:

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Fairfield, CA 94534

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About STC

The Society for Technical Communication is the world's largest professional organization devoted to the advancement of the theory and practice of technical communications. STC's more than 15,000 members include writers, editors, illustrators, graphic designers, multimedia artists, photographers, videographers, printers, publishers, educators, students and others whose work involves making technical information understandable by those who use it.

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STC Mission Statement

Creating and supporting a forum for communities of practice in the profession of technical communications.

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(Acting) President's Letter, September 2007

By Ken Umbach, Sacramento Chapter Acting President

Being (acting) president is not all it is cracked up to be. Nor, for that matter, is being 1st vice president (programs), as we have lost our scheduled October and November speakers. In my programs capacity, I will see if I can find a replacement speaker. No promises. If you have an idea, call or email.

As acting president, I suppose I can take to task the 1st vice president (programs) for his slackerhood. Be that as it may . . . a few technical communications comments, for whatever they may be worth.

A tempest recently broke out on the STC Contracting and Independent Consulting SIG list over writing for "seniors." It was rightly (and fervently) pointed out that the older generation is not stupid, ignorant, or necessarily technologically challenged. In fact, some are highly skilled and experienced—including long-time professionals in the field—and many have developed at least reasonable workaday competence with the Internet and personal computers.

That is an important point, I think, that some folks might overlook. One key to writing, whether on technical subjects or otherwise, is to respect the audience. Clarity and precision, of course, are valuable, and form much of the stock-in-trade of technical writers. But clarity and precision are important for readers of all ages, while subject-matter interests are not necessarily defined by age bracket.

The SIG discussion turned to a technical discussion (way over my head) of methods for sizing type in Web pages, allowing for users to resize for easier readability, and so forth. That, in turn leads me to another point: what we call "technical communication" encompasses a vast range of specialties, from the clear writing of technical information—whether for an audience of specialists or for general readers—to the hard-core issues of Web page design, font selection, color schemes, and more.

We encompass in our own chapter a microcosm of that vast range. That is a strength in one sense, as we bring together among our membership the universe of technical communication. It is a challenge in another sense, as we are not all talking the same language, nor sharing the same professional interests.

Our September speaker, Karl Palachuk, embodies both breadth and depth in technical communication, as a computer consultant, author and publisher of books on management of computers in small and medium businesses (SMBs), and motivational speaker and author. In the latter capacity, he has developed and written about a system called "Relax, Focus, Succeed," the topic of his September talk to the chapter.

I hope we will have an excellent turnout for Karl's presentation, as members will benefit from his presentation *and* from the example he sets of versatility and breadth of interests and accomplishments. ♦



Book Reviews

A Guided Tour of Free & Flexible Content Management

Content management made easy, flexible, and cheap—really cheap. That's the gist of Joomla!, the open source content management system that is growing more popular by the day. A guided tour through every aspect of a Joomla! implementation—that's the gist of "Beginning Joomla! From Novice to Professional," by Dan Rahmel.

Rahmel, author of several books including "Nuts and Bolts Filmmaking" and "Active Platform Sourcebook," now focuses on the power and simplicity of this free content management system.

After an introduction to Joomla! and its development history (Joomla! is actually an offshoot of Mambo, another open source CMS project), Rahmel jumps right into a tutorial on setup. In chapter 2, "Quickstart: Setting Up a Joomla! Site in 20 Minutes," the reader is stepped through setup basics, and alerted to common pitfalls. Using a Go Daddy account as an example, Rahmel starts us off with choosing a stable release to download and assessing whether the web host meets system requirements, and moves along to setting up the required MySQL database, editing the default menus, and selecting which modules to keep and which toss overboard.

Joomla!'s built-in feature set is extensive, but the availability of extensions gives the user a much wider range of options. Between the built-in features and extensions, Joomla! offers the user access to the likes of user polling, banner ad management, content approval control (for managing multiple contributors' submissions), inventory management, shopping carts, and CRM.

In fact, as Rahmel points out, the rich selection of extensions is a primary cause for Joomla!'s popularity. In chapter 7, "Joomla! Extensions," he illustrates the difference between modules, components, and plug-ins, lists the default modules, and introduces the reader to the benefits that a few of them offer. For example, there's the pair of modules that handle syndication and gathering of news. Site administrators can share their content via the mod_syndicate module, and collect news content for display on their own sites with the mod_feed module.

Throughout the book, Rahmel takes care to supply ample screen captures and conceptual diagrams, and to throw the reader a rope wherever there's some rough ground to be covered in setup. Chapter 3, "Installation and Configuration," devotes a whole section to challenges with Apache, PHP, and MySQL. The inclusion of resources that aid the user with tasks like site planning—like the FreeMind mind mapping application and the Leo information organizer discussed in chapter 2—round out a thorough introduction to this robust, free Content Management System.

Overall, this is an aptly named introduction to Joomla!'s power. With setup, customization, troubleshooting, and expansion addressed, "Beginning Joomla! From Novice to Professional" lives up to its promise, giving both the uninitiated and the experienced something of value. ♦

Chris Masotti

**Beginning Joomla! From
Novice to Professional
2007**
Apress
ISBN: 1-59059-848-2
475 pp.
\$44.99

A Primer on the Nuts and Bolts of Software Testing

It may seem that a study guide for software testing certification exam would be out of place on the bookshelf of a technical communicator, where one would expect to see titles covering Framemaker, project management, and audience analysis. But under the big tent of precision in writing, the science of writing and executing software tests is at the other end of the aisle from the art of

writing marketing copy. Look at job ads for testers, and you'll see that a good number of them ask for at least some technical writing experience.

There's a reason for that, of course. Effective software testing relies on precise instructions and clearly defined boundaries between what's acceptable and what's not. This is something technical communicators know well. But those TCs who don't at least occasionally scale the departmental wall to visit the testing department may not have even a remote understanding of what goes on there.

Those interested in taking a peek over the wall will find an experienced guide in "Software Testing Foundations," by Andreas Spillner, Tilo Linz, and Hans Schaefer. Though written as a study guide for the International Software Testing Qualifications Board's (ISTQB) Certified Tester Exam, "Software Testing Foundations" also serves well as an introduction to the principles of testing. It discusses the tools used in testing, testing's role in the software development lifecycle (SDLC), processes used to define the content of tests.

<p>Software Testing Foundations 2007 O'Reilly ISBN: 1-933952-08-3 288 pp. \$44.95</p>
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While the aim of the readership may vary (not everyone will use it for exam preparation), the structure of the content makes the content easily accessible to everyone. Beginning with, naturally, "The Basics of Software Testing," the authors progress through testing's role in the SDLC, static testing, dynamic analysis (black box/white box techniques), test management, and finally, test tools.

The authors have served on the German and Norwegian testing boards (which are in turn members of the ISTQB), and Linz is a former president of ISTQB. All three have extensive experience in software testing, and have been involved with industry organizations and standards development. Making good use of this combined experience, Spillner, Linz, and Schaeffer produced a systematic introduction to testing that leaves little out.

Throughout the book, the authors use their fictional "VirtualShowRoom" application as a case study, working it into each section to aid comprehension. For instance, in section 5, "Black Box Testing Techniques," their options module ("Edit Vehicle") is used to demonstrate the development of a transition tree for use in state transition testing. Writers (or testers) who work from limited—or non-existent—development specifications will also appreciate the tools discussed here, such as decision tables and cause-effect graphs, that aid in the documentation of an application's functionality.

The only issue I have with the book is that it is a translation, having been authored in German. And being a translation, it has the expected quirks of language, occasionally misplaced prepositions, etc. that would be expected. Still, the authors have managed to deliver a very thorough introduction to software testing that would serve equally well as either a reference or study guide. ♦

Chris Masotti

Next Month: The follow up to "Software Testing Foundations," we review "Software Testing Practice: Test Management," by Andreas Spillner, Thomas Rossner, Mario Winter, and Tilo Linz.

Network Warrior

Let me be candid. I am not a system administrator or a computer geek. I know just enough about computers and networks to be dangerous, yet I found Network Warrior by Gary A. Donahue (O'Reilly 2007) an excellent tool for someone at my level and far beyond my level. Donahue has successfully created a thorough guide and reference that contains gems of wisdom and practical information for

<p>Network Warrior 2007 O'Reilly ISBN: 0-596-10151-1 598 pp. \$44.99</p>

both new and experienced network engineers and others who need to understand complex computer networks.

In keeping with the stated audience—certified network engineers—Network Warrior bypasses basic topics that network technicians should know, such as the OSI layers and network cabling basics. Instead Donahue starts where I would expect with a foundational overview of topologies and concepts for typical networks.

To this foundation he adds and builds layer by layer, covering hubs and switches, routers and routing protocols, multilayer switches, VLANs, tunnels, telecom networks, security and firewalls, network and server load balancing, quality of service issues, and complex network design principles.

In every chapter, Donahue's explanations are clear and down-to-earth without being simplistic, and he illustrates every concept with helpful diagrams and real-world examples. For instance, here's Donahue's wonderfully clear introduction to server load balancing at the start of Chapter 27:

Server load balancing (SLB) is what enables multiple servers to respond as if they were a single device. This idea becomes very exciting when you think in terms of web sites or anywhere a large amount of data is being served.... Having many smaller, less expensive web servers is often more viable than having one large, extremely powerful server.

Of particular value to administrators are the many example configuration scripts Donohue offers for typical devices and applications. For most of his explanations, Donahue unapologetically uses Cisco equipment because he says it is the most common. Though the scripts may vary for other kinds of equipment, Donahue explains the overall concepts well. Most engineers will be able to follow the examples and revise them to fit the specific equipment and situation.

Even more valuable than the abundant examples is Donahue's sage advice. He tells plenty of stories about typical mistakes, many based on personal experience, so that we can learn without falling into the same traps. Even more remarkable, Donahue wades into the fetid swamp of management politics with tales about why some proposals fail to gain support and how you can maneuver past those alligators to get your project approved.

Consider this nugget:

GAD's Maxim #1: Network designs are based on Politics, Money, and The right way to do it—in that order.

To put it another way, if you want to do it the right way, you need money, and the only way to get money is through politics.

Any seasoned technologist immediately recognizes this truth, but not all of us are born politicians. For the rest of us, Donahue explains how to justify a project in a way that makes sense to management. He even occasionally enters the realm of philosophy with wise words about accepting that sometimes the perfect project must be scaled back until it is both cost-effective and just good enough. Perfection, though satisfying, is usually too expensive.

I cannot say enough about Network Warrior as a practical guide and reference for anyone who needs to know more than the basics about networking. Technical writers documenting networks, and especially new network engineers or experienced engineers whose skills are constantly being challenged by a rapidly growing network will find the book invaluable. ♦

Chuck Petch

DIY, As You Like It

The perfect PC. Can there be such a thing? With a couple thousand bucks to drop, you and I may disagree on whether to go for massive storage capacity and a system that will rarely if ever crash, or to blow half the cost on rapid graphics and speakers that will have the neighbor making a call downtown. With a few thousand more, we could both have our way, but in a few months, our 'perfect PC' would no longer be worthy of the name.

So let's be realistic. When we say we want a 'perfect PC,' we're talking about a machine that meets specific needs that can vary from buyer to buyer, fits within a reasonable budget, and will not be obsolete next month. Oh, and unless you spend your working days (or free nights) immersed in this stuff, you're going to need a little hand holding from someone who's been around the block several hundred times.

With the 2nd edition of "Building the Perfect PC," Robert Thompson and Barbara Thompson have hit the mark. Here's a book that not only provides the shopping list and steps you through assembling the beast, it also educates the reader on what principles are behind making such a list. So if you pick this book up, say, eight months after it was published and perhaps ten months after it was written, it will be as useful and timely as ever.

"But," you say, "what about my graphics card?" Fear not. I can eat my cake, and you can have it, too. While there is, of course, no such thing as perfect-for-everybody PC, the authors have us both covered, with a whole smorgasbord of perfect PCs.

Indeed, the Thompsons' range of project options actually addresses the needs spectrum pretty well. Readers can choose one (or more, naturally) of the following 'perfect PC' projects: the Mainstream PC, the SOHO Server, the Gaming PC, the Media Center PC, the Small Form Factor PC and, last and least expensive, the Budget PC. The reader is free to stray even from these six options and build, for instance, a Small Form Factor Gaming Budget PC (though I wish you luck on that one).

The principle behind the perfect in any category is defining requirements, setting priorities, and finding the right intersection of quality and price—the "sweet spot," as the authors call it. There is a point after which price rises sharply and performance rises slowly. That is where to buy, and that is how the authors select components. If the specific components chosen by the authors are out of date, the guidelines they use will help the reader make wise choices from current options.

With abundant advice from the authors, as well as their technical editors and others, the reader is armed against assembly 'gotchas,' dishonest vendors, and good, old-fashioned ignorance. For example, their use of a TV capture card is fine for a Linux server, but ill-advised if the same server will be running Windows.

As for the book's title, you may ask why build, rather than buy, the perfect PC. A few of the authors' reasons, in no particular order: lower cost, more choice, better component quality, experience, no bundled software. They make a pretty convincing case for it, too. If you're in the market for a new PC, and have even a slight interest in building your own, give this book a read. So now I'm left with just one question: do I go for the Mainstream Media SOHO Gaming Center, or the Budget Factor Small SOHO Server? Decisions, decisions. ♦

<p>Building the Perfect PC 2007 O'Reilly ISBN: 0-596-52686-5 422 pp. \$34.99</p>

Chris Masotti

Area Events

- 9/19/2007** *Webinar: DITA, Topic-Based Authoring, and Information Mapping-What Authors Need to Know*
- The Darwin Information Typing Architecture (DITA) is an information architecture for authoring, managing, and publishing topic-oriented content. Organizations around the world are finding that DITA provides an appealing option for obtaining the benefits of XML publishing. But switching to topic-based writing requires authors to apply new tools and techniques that can be daunting for those unfamiliar with using topics and information types to create structured, reusable content. The good news is that Information Mapping has been helping authors learn to effectively apply these concepts for over 40 years.
- Information:** www.infomap.com
- 9/20/2007** *Fall Networking Social*
- Catch up with your fellow STC members over appetizers and beverages at Moylan's Brewery and Restaurant in Novato! Exchange job leads and writing tips, and chat about the latest technologies.
- Information:** www.stc-northbay.org/nextmeeting.php or www.moylans.com
- 9/25/2007** *Webinar: Creating Effective Laboratory Quality Manuals*
- Nationally known quality expert Lucia Berte and Information Mapping's learning programs manager Cathy Nairne will discuss the significance of ISO 15189 and how to approach the development of effective laboratory quality manuals. 25 Sept 2007 Noon-1:00 pm EST
- Information:** www.infomap.com
- 9/26/2007** *Getting Started as an Independent*
- Start: 2007-09-26 13:00/End: 2007-09-26 14:00 Eastern
- Is the siren song of independent contracting luring you away from your captive employment? If so, don't get shipwrecked on the rocky shore! Get all the details on how to get started by attending a one-hour conference call, "Getting Started as an Independent" moderated by Linda Gallagher. Linda is the immediate past manager of the Consulting and Independent Contracting SIG and owner of TechComm Plus LLC. Join Linda on Wednesday, September 26. The call starts at 1:00 PM eastern time (US). Your only cost is the toll for the call. You will also receive a copy of the handouts Linda distributed at the conference. To sign up for this exciting conference call, send an e-mail to Don White (dwhite@jrtcllc.com), and he'll respond to you with the call details. Hurry! Only 30 seats are available for this information-packed call!
- Information:** dwhite@jrtcllc.com
- 9/26/2007** *Darwin Information Typing Architecture (DITA) with Andrea Ames and Jennifer Fell*
- DITA provides excellent support for reuse of information. But developing information for reuse is more than just the right technology. It's about team mindset, team organization, information architecture, best practices for using the technology, and best practices for writing. In this session, we'll discuss how our team developed information that is easily reused in different product packages, for different releases, on different platforms. We'll provide tips for how you can help your team migrate from the singular "my product, my book" mindset to the plural "my technologies, my solutions" mindset. We'll also discuss how DITA helped reinforce and enable the new mindset.
- Information:** <http://www.stc-siliconvalley.org>

Area Events

10/2/2007 *Minimalism: Creating Manuals People Can Use*

Start: 2007-10-02 08:30/End: 2007-10-03 04:30

The JoAnn Hackos Workshop Series announces the Minimalism: Creating Manuals People Can Use workshop in Mountain View, CA August 14-15, 2007 taught by JoAnn Hackos. We invite you to join JoAnn in understanding the key to getting the maximum return on your single-sourcing investment.

Minimalism continues to be one of our most popular workshops. As you know, information developers everywhere are being told to cut the volume, reduce costs for translation, make information more easily accessible, and provide only what audiences need to know. The Minimalism workshop gives you specific guidelines for evaluating your information and making the right decisions to reduce the volume. But the Minimalism workshop is not about cutting the verbiage alone. We focus on what readers really need to know.

Bring your own materials to the workshop and participate in a series of hands-on sessions to examine your documents and plan for major changes. Many attendees report on decreasing documentation volume by 50% and translation costs by more.

Information: www.comtech-serv.com/workshops/index.shtml or contact us at workshops@comtech-serv.com or at 303-232-7586

10/3/2007 *e-Workshop: Making Web Content Work!*

Start: 2007-10-03 12:00 US/Eastern

Writing for the Web presents challenges even for those with conventional writing skills. How you organize and structure information becomes critically important. Maintaining consistency is a major concern. You need strategies for keeping readers oriented and ensuring that information is easy to find. When Web content is not presented effectively, customers can be lost and the cost to the organization can be high.

This 2½ -hour, instructor-led e-workshop is designed to help writers and designers organize and present content effectively on the Web. By analyzing the audience and applying research-based principles, participants can make Web content user-focused and easy to find.

Information: www.infomap.com

10/4/2007 *EBSTC: "Writing for International Audiences and Translation," by Nancy Rains*

Join us as senior member Nancy Rains shares her insights on strategies to meet these challenges:

- * Checking for cultural bias in your materials
- * Reviewing the many types of data that are culture specific
- * Developing a writing style that is accommodating to all your readers

Information: <http://ebstc.org/index.html>

Area Events

10/10/2007 *STC Berkeley: Lessons Learned from Web Applications and User Centered Design, with Sarah B. Nelson and David Verba*

Recent developments in web applications, commonly referred to as Web 2.0, have taken advantage of existing technologies in new and sometimes surprising ways. This has allowed web developers to take a more sophisticated approach to the usability of their applications. Many lessons have been learned along the way. Sarah B. Nelson and David Verba will discuss the current state of web applications and provide new ways to keep users in the center of your work.

The evening will be divided into two parts: first, a presentation that introduces concepts and design principles associated with Web 2.0; second, a discussion of how these principles can be applied in technical communication.

Information:

www.stc-berkeley.org/MonthlyMeeting/october2007_meeting/calendar.shtml

10/18/2007 *STC North Bay: Using FrameMaker with DITA, with Scott Prentice*

Scott is the President of Leximation, Inc. providing tools and solutions for print and online publishing. He has been working in the technical publications field for 16 years, some of that time as a technical writer but most as a tools developer focusing on custom online help and FrameMaker development.

Information: www.stc-northbay.org

10/23/2007 The Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) will hold its annual convention, "Learning Within the Kaleidoscope: A Culture of Technology," at the Hyatt Regency Orange County in Anaheim, California.

Information: (877) 677-AECT or www.aect.org

10/24/2007 *e-Workshop: Making Procedures Work!*

Start: 2007-10-24 12:00 US/Eastern

Ineffective - or non-existent - procedures can lead to mistakes and performance errors, poor product quality, failed audits, fines for noncompliance, a swamped help desk, and high stress and low morale. What can writers do to improve their procedures and avoid painful business problems?

In this e-Workshop, participants will discuss why procedures are a problem in many organizations, take the first steps toward improving the effectiveness of their procedures, and apply a checklist to identify their procedure problems.

Information: www.infomap.com

10/31/2007 *ATA Annual Conference*

10/31/2007 - 11/3/2007

The American Translators Association (ATA) will hold its annual conference at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in San Francisco, California.

Information: (703) 683-6100 or conference@atanet.org

11/1/2007 *East Bay STC Meeting - "What's New in Adobe Publishing Tools?" - Max Dunn*

Information: <http://ebstc.org/index.html>

Treasurer's Report

Members Only: The balance sheet and profit & loss statement are available in their entirety at our Yahoo Group (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Sac_STC).

Next STC Sacramento Meeting: Wednesday, September 19th, 2007

Speaker: Karl W. Palachuk

Topic: Relax Focus Succeed

Relax? Focus? Succeed? Chances are you, don't think of these activities together—you don't see them as being related to one another. Perhaps Focus and Success. But Relaxation?

"Success literature" is full of Focus and Hard Work but shy on emphasizing Balance. Without Relaxation, without balance, work cannot be successful. Sometimes you have to not work. Sometimes you have to give yourself the gift of enjoying your life. And when you do this, consciously aware that you're giving yourself this gift, then you achieve clarity: Your Focus becomes sharper, your work more meaningful, and your Success that much closer.

The goal of RFS is to learn how to balance your personal and professional lives and become more successful in both.

About Karl W. Palachuk

Karl W. Palachuk is the author of several books for technical consultants, including "The Network Documentation Workbook" and "Service Agreements for SMB Consultants." His first non-technical book, entitled "Relax Focus Succeed," was published in 2007.

As an author, trainer, and blogger, Karl has traveled across North American and Europe training technical consultants. His topics have ranged from network documentation to managed services, best practices, and even hiring processes. Karl has been a Microsoft Hands-on-Lab instructor for the Small Business Specialist program.

Free to STC Sacramento chapter members

Free to first-time visitors and Friends of STC, \$5 for non-members

Place: [Coco's Bakery and Restaurant, 7887 Madison Avenue, Citrus Heights](#)

Networking/No-host dinner: 6:00 pm, **Presentation:** 7:00 pm

Info: http://stcsacramento.org/03_Meetings.htm

2007 Gordon Scholarship Winners Announced

By Patrick Lufkin

The Dr. Kenneth M. Gordon Memorial Scholarship has announced that Ayelet Prizant and Shiria Behiri have each been awarded a Gordon Scholarship in the amount of \$750. Both are students in San Francisco State University's Technical and Professional Writing Program.

Sponsored by the combined STC chapters of Northern California, Gordon scholarships are awarded at the beginning of each academic year. Award recipients are also offered a complimentary basic student membership in STC.

To qualify, applicants must be currently enrolled in a technical communication program at an accredited college or university, and have completed enough work to demonstrate their potential for success in the field.

The scholarship is named for Dr. Kenneth M. Gordon. Dr. Gordon worked as a technical editor at the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory and was a popular, long-time member of the East Bay chapter of STC. He was president of the chapter from 1985–88, and also its newsletter editor. He is remembered as an early advocate for the Northern California Technical Communication Competition, and for having contributed greatly to the success of STC in Northern California in the early years.

The scholarship was created in 1992 when the East Bay chapter discovered that it had \$20,000 left over from having run a very successful 1990–91 technical communication competition. Dr. Gordon had recently died, and those involved decided to set aside \$10,000 of the proceeds to establish a scholarship in his name.

Since that time, the Gordon Scholarship has been funded with proceeds from the Northern California Technical Communication Competition. This year's competition is currently ramping up. If you would like to enter or help, contact the competition director, Richard Mateosian at xrm@pacbell.net. ♦

For more information on the scholarship, contact the scholarship chair, Patrick Lufkin, lufkin@ix.netcom.com.

2007-08 Northern California Technical Communication Competition Call for Entries

Background

The Berkeley, East Bay, North Bay, San Francisco, and Silicon Valley chapters are co-sponsoring a technical communication competition. A substantial portion of the proceeds will benefit the STC Kenneth Gordon Scholarship. The Gordon Scholarship committee is managing the competition.

The competition serves Northern California, but we accept entries from elsewhere. If you have a local competition, we hope you will support it by sending your entries there. If you are in our area, we hope you will support our competition by sending your entries here.

We send Distinguished award winners to the Society level competitions for technical publications, online communication, and technical art. Last year, all of the entries we sent to the Society level won

Distinguished there, and one won Best of Show. We are proud of the quality of entries we receive and the quality of our judging process.

For more information

If you have questions that this document does not answer, please send email to xrm@pacbell.net. Make the subject of the email **STC Competition Query**

Deadline for submitting entries

We must receive the entry by noon, Saturday, September 21, 2007.

Where to send entries

STC Competition

c/o Herr

5292 Kathy Way

Livermore, CA 94550

(925) 443-4514 (fixed)

(925) 989-3723 (mobile)