

Technical communication brainstorming meeting

5:35 p.m.
 Tuesday, June 10, 2008
 Room P405, Red River College,
 160 Princess Street
 Contact Alexa Campbell by
 e-mail (ACampbell@rrc.mb.ca)

September dinner meeting

5:45 p.m.
 Tuesday, September 9, 2008
 (Note this is the second
 Tuesday of the month)

**AuthorIt with
 Leslie McKendry-Smith**

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STC Community achievement award

STC Manitoba—Party time! Excellent!

In April 2008, executive committee members submitted an application to the STC Community achievement award committee to recognize the hard work of STC Manitoba chapter members and volunteers.

In mid-May, Past President Brad Friesen received the following e-mail message from Dale Erickson: "As manager of the Community Achievement Award Evaluation Committee, it is my honor to inform you that the Manitoba Community has earned the Excellence award for 2007–2008. The citation on your certificate will read:

For increasing value to your members, raising your profile within the Manitoba technical communication community, and establishing the STC Manitoba forums

Congratulations to all members of the Manitoba Community."



Brad receives STC Manitoba's Community of Excellence award from Lisa Pappas.

STC Manitoba is 1 of 13 communities to receive the Community of Excellence award and the only Canadian community recognized in any category.

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STC Manitoba
 is a chapter of



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

About Manuscript

Manuscript and its shorter sibling *Micro Manuscript* are the official newsletters of STC Manitoba. Together, they are published 10 times annually between September and June. The opinions expressed are those of the authors. Submissions, news, reviews, and other items of interest are welcome. Contributions may be edited for length. Deadline is the fifteenth of every month. For example, the deadline for the November issue is October 15. Submissions and ideas are welcome. Please make arrangements in advance with the editor. By submitting an article, you agree to its publication in *Manuscript* and for other STC publications to reprint it without permission. The writer holds copyright. When submitting an article, please let the editor know if it has been published or submitted elsewhere.

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For more information about STC Manitoba, please visit our Web site at <http://www.stcmanitoba.org/>.



President, Andrew Quarry [Interim]
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Vice-President, Margaret LeSage
margaretl@caamanitoba.com
Past President, Brad Friesen
Secretary, Holly Steele
Treasurer, Donald Nordman
Membership, Vacant
Public relations, Dorothy Davidson
Program, Lauren Bailey
Meeting coordinator, Joanne Kusiak

Members of Manitoba's STC chapter gather at the Annual General Meeting in May and elect members to the STC Chapter. Each member on the executive is elected for a term of one year.

From the (Interim) President

We've just completed what the international Society for Technical Communication considers an excellent year. As evidence, they



presented the chapter with a certificate of our award of excellence at the STC summit in Philadelphia on June 1. Even before receiving word of the STC's recognition, many of us must have sensed that it was a particularly successful year. Notably, we had an excellent dinner program, which attracted a good proportion of our members, a substantial newsletter, and an exceptionally well attended and financially successful local conference.

One of the challenges that follows such success is the high expectation of continuing success. It's time to decide what we want to accomplish this year. I'd appreciate your thoughts on this matter.

Let me suggest the following points as a starting point:

- The chapter must be relevant to its members and fellow travellers and, to be relevant, the chapter must provide attractive programs and networking opportunities
- The programs and meeting times must be very well publicized
- The chapter executive must survive

Chapter relevance

Personal preferences and inclinations against a background of technological and societal trends determine relevance in millions of possible combinations. We have to make educated guesses on whether our potential audience for chapter meetings is interested in wordsmithing, arcane aspects of MS Word, content management applications, or gardening magazines. Our success in guessing correctly may quite literally be confounded by factors such as the price of rice in China. I believe that the broader the input we have into the process of trying to guess correctly, the better are our chances in attracting audiences.

Publicity

We must give our potential audience every opportunity to plan to attend. We accomplish this by getting speakers committed as soon as possible, and then publicizing the annual program before September and the individual meetings repeatedly through multiple channels.

Executive survival

Last year's success was purchased at the cost of major effort by members of the executive committee and a few others. This scale of effort can burn people out. If the burnout issue is ignored, it could threaten the survival of the executive. There seems to be general agreement that there won't be a local conference this year. My own opinion on this matter is that we should avoid taking on so much. Nevertheless, I think it is useful, for morale, to have some focus of

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(President continued from Page 2)

interest—perhaps a workshop of a day or less. Let’s have your ideas for the subject for a workshop!

As the responsibilities of the outgoing executive wind down, I’d like to comment on Brad Friesen’s

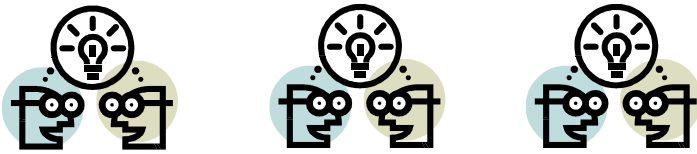
year of service as President. He carried the heavy workload of President, conference chair, and webmaster with apparent ease. We owe him a great deal.

Andrew

Support technical communication in Manitoba

Red River College has offered technical communicators the opportunity to earn either a certificate or a two-year diploma in technical communication. However, these programs are struggling for survival, and the membership in our chapter has remained somewhat static for several years. We need an injection of energy and new ideas.

How can we go about publicizing our profession? How can we attract new members? How can we ensure the future of technical communication in Manitoba by encouraging people to get training in our field?



Raising our profile in Manitoba

While we know that many of you support our profession, **we need your ideas and your time.** Alexa Campbell, lead instructor of the Technical Communication Diploma program, will facilitate a brainstorming session on raising the profile of technical communication in Manitoba.

Meeting details

Date: Tuesday, June 10, 2008, at 5:35 p.m.

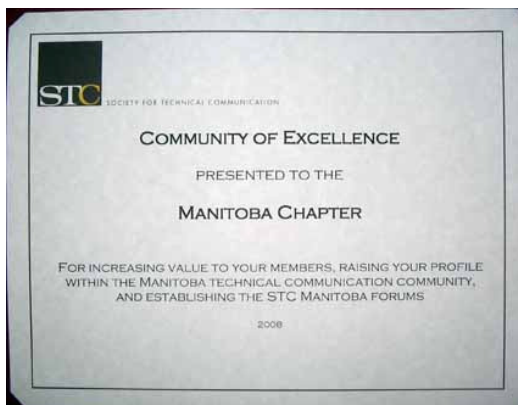
Location: Room P405, Red River College, 160 Princess Street Campus

Contact: Alexa Campbell by e-mail (ACampbell@rrc.mb.ca) or by phone (949-8455) for more details or indicate your intention to attend the session.

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To view this year’s winners visit stc.org/recog/awards01.comAchievement_winners.asp

Brad accepted the award on behalf of the chapter at the STC Summit (the annual international conference) on June 1, 2008.



Community of Excellence certificate presented during Leadership Day.



Brad stands by the listing of community award winners.

Report on 2008 Annual General Meeting

Out with the old and in with the new ...

Reported by Rachel Ines

On May 6, 2008, STC Manitoba held its annual general meeting. The evening featured special thank you's from outgoing chapter President Brad Friesen. Brad presented President's Awards to Nirdosh Ganske and Kevin Longfield for their contributions to the executive committee and to the chapter over the past year, and then some. Brad also presented certificate of thanks to chapter volunteers and executive committee members:

- Ben Davies
- Autumn Robbie-Draward
- Susan Haire
- Rachel Ines
- Andrew Quarry
- Holly Steele

The annual report distributed at the meeting outlined the activities of the executive committee and support staff. The annual report is posted on the chapter Web site at [www.stcmanitoba.org/Minutes/2008/STC annual report 2007-08.pdf](http://www.stcmanitoba.org/Minutes/2008/STC%20annual%20report%202007-08.pdf).

Members of the executive committee also acknowledged Brad's exceptional efforts over the past two years on the committee. In addition to serving as chapter president, Brad has served as both Web site coordinator for both the chapter and the conference, as well as conference co-chair for the second year in a row. Once again, thank you Brad for your enthusiasm and support. You have done an amazing job as president while in your second year as an STC member.

New executive committee

A great turnout of 17 surpassed the quorum required for electing the incoming executive for 2008–2009. This year's executive committee will be

President	*Andrew Quarry
Vice-President	Margaret LeSage
Past President	Brad Friesen
Secretary	Holly Steele
Treasurer	Donald Nordman
Public Relations Chair	Dorothy Davidson
Program Chair	Lauren Bailey
Membership Chair	Vacant

* Acting President on an interim basis

Andrew Quarry has kindly agreed to take on chapter presidential duties on an interim basis; the position of membership chair is still available. If any chapter member is interested in taking on an executive position, contact Andrew Quarry at andrew_quarry@cadencehs.ca.

Thanks to all the chapter members who came out to vote for the incoming executive for the 2008–2009 year.

Where the jobs are—STC Manitoba job bank



Looking for a technical communication job but unsure where to look? Are you wondering why you haven't been getting those notices in your e-mail box?

Earlier this year, the executive decided to move the STC Manitoba job bank online. Visit www.stcmanitoba.org/forums/viewforum.php?f=16&sid=74d177a4c64071fb5d74a490e8d7912e to find the most recent jobs posted. STC members who have registered for the forums are able to view new postings for 10 days before the postings are made available to the general public.

Remember, if you haven't registered on the forums yet, please do so first! You must register for the forums to be certain that you are viewing the most recent job postings. Don't be the last to know!

Publishing—not for the faint of heart

by Rachel Ines

"Publishing is getting ideas out that gets people excited," says Dorothy Dobbie. After more than 20 years of successful experience in the business, Dorothy is an authority on the subject. Whether publishing magazines for trades, gardeners, academia, or the logging industry, publishing is about communicating with an audience.

Dorothy first got involved in the publishing business 24 years ago, co-starting a company that produced publications for Winnipeg trade unions. She left the publishing business to enter politics but after leaving politics came back to what she knew—publishing. This time around, Dorothy looked for a new challenge. She wanted to go in a new direction, and went into the publishing business on her own.

Going on her gut feeling and after researching the market, Dorothy decided to publish a magazine on Manitoba gardens. Although Dorothy didn't know much about gardening, she was interested in the subject. She drew on her knowledge and experience in publishing by focusing on her business skills by selling advertising so that she could reach her intended audience.

Rachel Ines has happily completed her term as Vice-President of STC Manitoba. She is a graduate of the Technical Communication Diploma Program at Red River College and is an active member of the chapter.

From the editor

Hooray! We've reached the final issue of the year, and now I can take the summer off, relax, and ponder what to do next fall. That's right, no longer will I be acting like the editor, I will **be** the editor for the newsletter once again but this time, there will be no "acting" in my title.

At the May AGM, when Dorothy Dobbie spoke to us about publishing a magazine, I found what she had to say about the differences between the roles of the publisher and writer and about writing with passion particularly interesting. When you're passionate about what you write, Dorothy said "the words come easily and your meaning translates onto the page." The writing style is more pleasant to the reader and the joy of writing is the author's own reward.

Although she is the publisher and has a writing staff, Dorothy still writes a fair amount for the *Manitoba Gardener*. As the editor, I can relate to

The *Manitoba Gardener* was first published in 1998; she published two other magazines: the *Alberta Gardener* in 2000 and the *Ontario Gardener* in 2002. As a co-founder of Pegasus Publications, Dorothy has been able to expand her publishing ideas in different areas by focusing on what she calls the "wonder factor." By this, Dorothy explained that "as long as the wonder factor is there, we' [Pegasus Publications] have done our job" quite simply because people have been given something to think about.

In addition to her duties as publisher, Dorothy is actively involved in writing stories for her magazines. As with technical communication, publishing takes the needs of the audience into consideration. Communication is not trying to impress somebody—it's making the message clear.

Although publishing may seem a bit distant from what we do as technical communicators on a daily basis, the message Dorothy shared dealt with activities that we are familiar with: knowing who you are writing for, identifying the message, and most importantly being passionate about what you do.

Dorothy as I spend a good portion of my time developing and planning articles to write each month. Some months I find it's easier to write about a certain topic than other months.

As technical communicators, we may often find ourselves working with subject matter far removed from our passions and restricted to styles dictated by our clients. So how can we write about a topic passionately? Perhaps we can't. Or perhaps, we can find one thing, one topic and let that idea become our inspiration.

Ideas are the cheapest part of the writing. They are free! The hard part is what you do with the ideas you've gathered.
—Jane Yolen

Have a great summer everyone,

Rachel

Professional development courses

Course	Date	Offered through
Web site development: Intro	July 3 – August 5 2008	Red River College
HTML/XHTML	July 3 – August 5, 2008	Red River College
Technical Communication: Introduction	July 7 – July 18, 2008	Red River College
E-Marketing	June 18 – September 3, 2008	Red River College
Effective oral communication	July 7 – July 11, 2008	University of Winnipeg
Presenting to challenging audiences	June 14, 2008	University of Winnipeg

For more information about the courses listed, consult the school's Web site.

Red River College Continuing and Distance Education: www.rrc.mb.ca/files/File/coned/C+DE%202008%20Spring%20Course%20Schedule.pdf

University of Winnipeg Continuing Education: www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/cms-filesystem-action?file=pdfs/dce/timetable-spring-summer-08.pdf

Chapter action

Executive committee meeting

Newly elected executive committee members and the outgoing executive committee will be meeting in June to discuss any outstanding issues that need to be addressed. Following this meeting, a brainstorming session for the 2008–2009 year will take place on June 25, 2008 at 5:35 p.m.

The brainstorming meeting will be made open to any chapter member who wishes to attend and contribute their ideas.

Bring a guest winner

Congratulations to Susan Haire who is the 2007–2008 winner of the chapter "Bring a guest" contest. Over the past year, Susan brought the most guests to chapter dinner meetings. In lieu of a one year's paid membership, Susan will receive a pass to attend all the STC dinner meetings during the 2007–2008 year.

STC Forums

The STC forums are available for chapter members to network, discuss issues in technical communication, or just see what's happening with STC Manitoba.



If you've got a burning desire to discuss technical communication issues why not see what's happening on the forums

stcmanitoba.org/forums/index.php

Chapter archives

The chapter archives are currently being updated. During the summer, a list of chapter archives to date will be posted on the STC Manitoba forums to provide chapter members with an overview of our archival records. If you would like access to any of the archives, contact the chapter archivist, Rachel Ines at rachines@hotmail.com.