



# Lakeshore Connection

Wisconsin Chapter, Society for Technical Communication Volume 6, Issue 2 April 2005

## Trade show and joint meeting with WORDS in April

The next STC Wisconsin Chapter meeting is Tuesday, April 12 at the MSOE Alumni Partnership Center in Milwaukee.

The topic is "Showcasing Southeastern Wisconsin's Technical Communicators." This trade show format allows you or your organization to display your user manuals, online help, quick reference cards, e-learning modules, and other materials to your colleagues in the industry. This is a terrific way to network, find out what others are doing, and learn more about the possibilities and strengths of your own work!

The meeting is a joint meeting with WORDS (Wisconsin Organization of Documentation Specialists).

To sign up for a display table, please complete the enclosed form and return it by Tuesday, March 29.

### Schedule:

- 5:30 P.M. - 6:00 P.M. Networking
- 6:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M. Dinner
- 7:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M. Announcements and Trade Show

### Location:

MSOE Alumni Partnership Center, 1120 North Broadway (just south of the intersection of Juneau and Broadway). Parking is available in the lot next to the APC. We will need your car's make, model, and license plate number, so include that in your e-mail reply message.

### Meal:

The meal will be a delicious and bountiful buffet, so bring your appetite.

### Reservations:

To sign up for a display table, please complete the enclosed form and return it by Tuesday, March 29. If you have questions, contact Susan Duncan at [sduncan@catalystinternational.com](mailto:sduncan@catalystinternational.com) or 414-365-4755.

RSVP to the meeting either by e-mail to [STC-WI@email.com](mailto:STC-WI@email.com) or via the STC telephone reservation line at 414-299-0048.

When you reserve, please let us know your name, member status, telephone number, your car's make, model, and license plate number, and whether you will be having dinner.

The deadline for reservations is Friday, April 8. If you are unable to attend and have not cancelled your reservation by the Friday deadline, you will be expected to reimburse the chapter for the cost of your meal.

### Cost:

- \$15 for members of WORDS or STC attending the full program but NOT exhibiting in the trade show (\$10 for student members)
- \$7.50 for members of WORDS or STC attending the full program AND exhibiting in the trade show (\$5 for student members)
- \$20 for nonmembers of either group attending the full program
- \$2.50 no dinner ♦

### In this issue:

April meeting	1
Our new website	2
Member news	2
Change/upgrade	3
March recap	3
Chapter contacts	3
Editor's column	4

## A prototype of our new website is ready

The screenshot shows a website prototype for the Wisconsin Society for Technical Communication. The header is teal with a map of Wisconsin and the text 'WISCONSIN CHAPTER Society for Technical Communication'. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for 'About Us', 'Membership', 'News And Events', 'Job Exchange', 'Career Development', and 'Resources'. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Upcoming Events:**
  - CMS Workshop:** Time: 5:30, Date: 2005-02-06, Place: MSOE Alumni Center. Links: [RSVP](#) | [Details](#)
  - Dave's portal coding session:** Time: 5:30, Date: 2005-04-19, Place: Curtin Hall @ UWM. Links: [RSVP](#) | [Details](#)
- Contact:** Kathie Gorski, President. Email: [kgorski@execpc.com](mailto:kgorski@execpc.com)
- Officers:**
  - President: Kathie Gorski
  - Programs Mgr: Amy Carlson
  - Public Relations: Mollye Barrett
  - Membership Mgr: Diane Newbury
  - Secretary: Jim Green
  - Treasurer: Mike Witas
- WELCOME!** Welcome to the Wisconsin Chapter Web site. STC-WI serves Technical Writers, Graphic Artists, and other technical communication professionals throughout Wisconsin, especially in the Southeastern area of the state.
- President's Page:** See a [summary](#) of our 2004 activities.

A prototype of our newly re-designed website was recently made available to your Chapter's Administrative Council.

A screen capture of the main page of the new site is shown above.

The website was principally re-designed by Dave Clark, an assistant professor with the professional writing program at UW—Milwaukee and a member of our Chapter.

The Administrative Council is currently in the process of fine-tuning the website. This means adding some additional features for our members.

For example: we are hoping to include online registration for Chapter meetings, which would be done through a page on the site.

In addition, the website is very cleanly designed and user-friendly "behind the scenes." This means that Chapter officers and members will be able to easily update their relevant areas on different pages of the site.

The goal is to get our new website up and running sometime this spring. We will keep you informed about our progress in implementing the site. ♦

### Member news



Diane Newbury, our Chapter membership manager, reports these new members:

Barbara Beyer  
 James R. Dunkerley  
 Sherry A. Dunn  
 Eric J. Ellerman  
 Stephanie L. Marris  
 Constance Millard  
 Erin C. Nitka  
 Sampson D. Parsons  
 David T. Peterson  
 Richard F. Piontek  
 Mark Rattner  
 Mary F. Riffel  
 Sue Scheife  
 Stacy J. Schutten  
 Jean Tikusis  
 Dana T. Turner  
 Bonnie J. Wilberscheid

**Congratulations!** ♦

## Membership change/upgrade form

If you wish to upgrade your STC membership or add chapters or SIGs to your existing membership, please mail or fax a completed STC Membership Change/Upgrade Form to the STC office.

You can download and print the form from the STC Web site at:

[www.stc.org/chapterResources.asp](http://www.stc.org/chapterResources.asp) ♦

## “Designing and creating online training and e-learning material”

The topic for our March meeting was “Exploring the basics of designing and creating online training and e-learning material.” The meeting was held March 9 at the Midway (Best Western) Hotel in Brookfield.

The panelists were:

- **Mary Cutting.** She is a corporate training and education consultant who identifies, produces and presents effective learning solutions to clients. She is currently pursuing a master’s degree in e-learning education.
- **Cathy Dunham.** She has been an advanced Microsoft Office instructor and software consultant since 1994. She is currently working on a BS degree in Marketing Business to Business.
- **Kathy Rockteacher.** She is the Computer Education Specialist for ProHealth Care, Inc. in Waukesha. She develops instructional programs and provides instructor-led software training.

Mary Cutting began her presentation by pointing out that “70% of all training is still traditional instructor-led.” And, she said, “Less than 30% of all organizations are even budgeting for e-learning.”

Mary stated that e-learning is appropriate when:

- the content can be easily modularized and re-used
- passive learning is acceptable
- the content has a long shelf-life (the content won’t be changing soon)
- many learners need access to the content

*Continued, page 4*

## Wisconsin Chapter Officers and Contacts

**Web site:**  
[www.stcmilwaukee.org](http://www.stcmilwaukee.org)

**President:**  
Kathie Gorski  
262-628-1672  
[kgorski@execpc.com](mailto:kgorski@execpc.com)

**Vice President and Public Relations Manager:**  
Mollye Barrett  
414-331-1378  
[mollye@clearpath.cc](mailto:mollye@clearpath.cc)

**Treasurer:**  
Mike Witas  
414-224-1661  
[mwitas@execpc.com](mailto:mwitas@execpc.com)

**Secretary and newsletter editor:**  
Jim Green  
262-879-5148  
[jim.green@fiserv.com](mailto:jim.green@fiserv.com)

**Membership Manager:**  
Diane Newbury  
414-228-8416  
[dnewbury@execpc.com](mailto:dnewbury@execpc.com)

**Program Manager:**  
Amy Carlson  
[Amy.L.Carlson@jci.com](mailto:Amy.L.Carlson@jci.com)

**Mentoring:**  
Dave Clark  
[dclark@uwm.edu](mailto:dclark@uwm.edu)

**Webmaster:**  
Ron Kurtus  
[ronk@RonKurtus.com](mailto:ronk@RonKurtus.com)



*Designing and creating online training material and e-learning material, continued from page 3*

- the learners are dispersed geographically
- the training/learning material must be rolled out quickly
- the learners are highly motivated

A basic principle of e-learning design, Mary said, is to “start simple and keep it simple, until you can see how your learners are dealing with it.”

Kathy Rockteacher told us to “put the learning in e-learning.” She proposed a practice scenario: new ATMs (automated teller machines) are being installed, and users have to learn how to use them.

The solution was to design a web-based tutorial for customers, which would instruct them in how to use the new ATMs. But in order to design a successful tutorial, you need to do a task analysis — “what do people need to know, and what order do they do it in.”

“Successful tutorials are going to be engaging and interactive,” Kathy said. “The style has to be persuasive to motivate your learners to take interest in the subject matter.” Appeal to their self-interest. Many users ask the question, “What’s in it for me (WIIFM)?”

And, she said, “We want to make sure that we grab peoples’ attention right in the beginning.” Otherwise, users might go elsewhere.

“If it’s not relevant to our content, it’s distracting from our purpose,” she said. “Basically, it’s all about the learner.”

Cathy Dunham presented “Designing for Layout, Navigation and Delivery.”

Cathy said that in web-based design, “You’re looking at readability versus irritability.”

To improve and increase online readability, use small chunks of information; eliminate scrolling; use short sentences. In addition, “simplify navigation so that reader doesn’t get lost.”

And make your web pages interesting. “Think ‘entertainment,’” Cathy said. “Think about what will make people come back to your site.”

When designing a home page, she said, ask yourself “How many topics do you need? What are your key access points?”

She also provided us with material to do storyboarding as we designed the first page of a tutorial or a web home page. ♦

## Editor’s column

*By James Green*

When I was a little boy, my friends and I used to try and

impress one another with how many of something we had — how many marbles, how many fossils, how many baseball cards, how many whatever.

We would say things like, “I got a zillion of ‘em,” or “Oh, I got a gazillion.”

I remember one time, though, when the winner was a kid who yelled, “Oh yeah? Well, I got FIFTY-ELEVEN DOZEN!”

“Fifty-eleven dozen,” it seems, represented a huge number — the biggest number he could think of.

If you’re a technical communicator in a business or organization, nowadays it probably seems like you’re handling “fifty-eleven dozen” projects all at the same time.

The key — when you’re feeling overwhelmed — is to prioritize. Make a list of your fifty-eleven dozen projects, and then decide: What needs to be done today? Tomorrow? Next week? What can be part of a long-term plan?

This simple strategy will allow you to focus on your immediate goals — what needs to be done *now* — and by doing that, to be more productive.

(Note: I do not recommend going into your supervisor’s office and reminding her that you’re handling “fifty-eleven dozen” projects. She will think that you’re weird. Trust me.) 😊 ♦

**WORDS/STC Trade Show Exhibitor's Form**  
**Tuesday, April 12, 2005**  
**MSOE Alumni Partnership Center**

**To reserve a booth at the 2005 WORDS/STC Trade Show, complete this form and submit it by Tuesday, March 29, 2005 via email, fax, or mail to:**

Susan Duncan	Phone:	(414) 365-4755
Catalyst International, Inc.	Fax:	(414) 362-6794
8989 N. Deerwood Drive	e-mail:	sduncan@catalystinternational.com
Milwaukee, WI 53223		

Booth coordinator/contact person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exhibitor profile**

In 50 words or less, provide a profile of your organization, department, or, if you are an individual member, your experience, and a brief description of your exhibit to be published in a handout at the Trade Show.

---

---

---

---

---

**Exhibitor needs**

Do you need an electrical outlet?     Yes     No

Do you need extension cords?     Yes     No

Do you need tables?     Yes     No    If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you need chairs?     Yes     No    If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you need an easel?     Yes     No

Do you need anything else? \_\_\_\_\_

**General Notes for the Trade Show:**

- You are responsible for supplying your own equipment, such as PC, laptop, and software.
- We encourage you to create a banner, sign, table tent, or some type of display telling us who you are.
- We encourage you to bring handouts or giveaways to accompany your exhibit. This will help people reference your information at a later date. Please include your name and your company name on the handouts.
- We will contact you prior to the Trade Show to verify your exhibitor needs and give you more information.
- We ask that all exhibitors be set up by 5:30 p.m.