IDeaL: Design for Learning

Newsletter of the Instructional Design & Learning SIG

http://www.stcidlsig.org

SIG MANAGER'S THOUGHTS *by Jackie Damrau, SIG Manager*

Hello everyone!

A big sigh of relief! Conference is over, the feet have recovered from the insurmountable walk each day, normal sleep patterns have returned, and after a travel-delayed day, I'm home.

The 55th STC Annual Technical Summit in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was as packed with sessions, meetings, networking, and other items as anything you could imagine. Just finding time to visit vendors on the Expo Hall and meet with new and old friends was hectic.

Your SIG leaders did you proud, though, with their hard efforts at recruiting volunteers. We twisted arms and now have the following folks added to the administrative council:

- Treasurer: Gary Samartino

- Co-Secretaries: Maralee Sautter and Mary Ryba Knepper

- Scholarships Manager: Jamye Sagan

- Membership Manager: Carol Widstrand

We still have needs for volunteers to help in our committees. So let us know what committee you want to help with and we'll put you in touch with the right person.

The SIG events at the conference were well-received. We started on Sunday evening with the Welcome Reception. While I didn't get to spend any time at the table, Jeanette Rogers and others represented us that evening.

Our Networking Luncheon was on Monday. We had six full tables of SIG members and prospective members looking to find out anything they could about instructional design. This is where we found people, like Maralee, who stepped forward to help us out.

Tuesday morning started bright and early with a SIG Business Meeting. We installed your newly elected officers—Jeanette Rogers and Christopher Harding (absent)—as Assistant SIG Managers and to Karen Baranich, we said "so long", but you're not through yet.

Karen and I conducted the Business meeting where Karen had the group do a metaphor icebreaker, then we had some discussion group activities, and finally we

did a bit of idea construction on what the people in the room wanted to see the SIG deliver this year. We came away with great ideas! So, volunteer to help us deliver to you the things you want.

Tuesday evening was full of festivities as the SIG received the Community of Distinction award for Community Achievement. Also, several members were honored with membership awards:

Associate Fellows:
William L Collins, Ann-Marie Grissino Gloria A Reece, Sheryl Lockett Zubak

Fellows:
Jackie A Damrau, Rich Maggiani

The SIG Progression was on Wednesday morning. We all had fun and lots of people coming to hear about instructional design topics. A big thank-you to the SIG presenters and those who came to hear what we had to say.

As the conference wound down, it was time to head for the airport. Now, the planning begins for next year's 56th STC Annual Technical Summit in Atlanta, Georgia. Join us in Atlanta by helping us to put on a great offering to our SIG members. We can use folks now to help us begin planning the SIG activities and events.

Now, have a restful summer. Your new leaders and committee managers will be spending the next few months working on the strategic plan. We have Web seminars, discussion calls, and other wonderful things coming your way this next year. Of course, we want to hear from you as well as to what we can do for you. Drop me an email at manager@stcidlsig.org.

Regards,

Jackie

The Editor's Word

by [Robert Hershenow](#)

As I write this I'm surrounded by boxes; tomorrow the movers will load all of them— and this computer—on a truck to our new home in toasty California.

After almost seven years on the East Coast, we're headed home again. But I feel fortunate to have been here in the Philadelphia area for the STC's 55th Annual Communications Summit.

This year I attended leadership day for the first time. It was quite enjoyable to meet so many Chapter and SIG leaders from so many different places. Also quite inspiring to hear so many viewpoints about the future of our work as technical communicators, and how we can help the STC to best serve its members in promoting and advancing that work.

I was also able to attend Tuesday's sessions, including the IDL SIG business meeting and a SIG luncheon (though not IDL's). The SIG luncheons are great networking experiences – I recommend them highly.

In this issue: Jeanette Rogers writes about overcoming fear, and Jayme Sagan, Cynthia Silversides, Karen Baranich, and Sonja Powell provide eyewitness reports from the Philadelphia Convention Center. Sylvia Miller's photos on page 9

Check out our list of new members and, as always, remember that this newsletter belongs to you—so what would you like to write about? Let me hear from you!

- Robert

FEATURE ARTICLE: Conquering the Fear

By Jeanette Rogers

Standing in front of the room, I prepared to give my master's thesis presentation. My fear was tangible as I put my data on the projector, and the graph on the vellum blurred. My hands continued to shake so much that I dropped my note cards, scattering them across the floor and out of order.

Where was this fear coming from? Was it ever going to end?

When can I go back to my quiet corner and work on the things I want to on my own?

One way or another, we all encounter fear. For many, it can prevent us from achieving goals or even living our lives the way we want. Our fear can vary, from losing a job, asking for a raise, closing a deal, to even just standing up and asking a question. Realizing that I live with very little fear these days, I thought I'd evaluate how I lost the fear that I had up through graduate school. Chatting with several other STC presenters and leaders at the conference, I gathered the following bits of advice on ways to conquer the fear, no matter what you are afraid of.

"The only dumb question is the one you're too afraid to ask."

– Emma C. Hamer

In our jobs as instructional designers, it is absolutely vital that we ask questions. However, many people are afraid to sound stupid. The reality is that as a content developer you are supposed to be naïve when you start a new job or project. This ensures that you attain the learner's perspective.

To conquer the fear of speaking or asking the first question, plan ahead. As Andrea Ames suggests, prepare for your first question and work within a safe environment. If you are the type who doesn't want to worry all the way through a meeting, ask the question in the beginning. Or, if you'd prefer to take your time and build up to a question, plan to ask the question at the end. You could even practice the question with others beforehand.

As a friend once told me, take baby steps. This applies to anything you want to achieve. You can't expect to be proficient at something overnight; take small, thoughtful steps to achieve

your goals. After you get used to asking the first question, speaking up becomes easier and you'll slowly begin to ask more and more questions, ensuring that you gain the knowledge you desire.

This same is true regarding the common fear of speaking in front of large audiences. You have to build up to it. Start out practicing a presentation in front of a few people, or even an empty room if that is what it takes to get started! Then start speaking to larger groups, 10-15 perhaps, and before you know it you will be talking to larger audiences. There are many tips for becoming comfortable in front of large groups (see Web sites such as http://www.school-for-champions.com/speaking/fear.htm), but you have to build up to it, baby steps.

Fake it until you make it

People are attracted to confidence. As we develop our skills we become more competent in what we do. That is what the baby steps are all about. This, in turn, transfers into confidence, which brings others to us for advice or support. Until you have that natural confidence, and while you are taking baby steps, you may need to fake that confidence until you are successful. This is particularly important for people trying to make it as an independent consultant or contractor.

Often, STC members asked me for advice about independent consulting; many are fearful to take that first step. Confidence plays a huge factor in how people perceive you and how successful you can be if you do decide to go independent. If you are confident that you are worth a certain amount and

can do a particular job, you will be more likely to be hired and get your asking rate. If you lack confidence and continue to make exceptions, people will sense it and take advantage of it. While you will need to prove you can do what you claim, taking the first step with confidence will improve your opportunities.

Fear of losing a job

Every so often you need to stop and reboot, or as Bernard Aschwanden says, "Ctrl Alt Delete" your brain. We get stuck in a particular mode of operation, putting up with all types of stressors at work because we can't see past the fear of losing our jobs.

While taking a few extra days to yourself might be useful, taking more time away from your job can help relieve the stress. If you can't take a sabbatical, save your funds to take some unpaid time off, or even consider quitting!! Quitting a job can be quite liberating. While it might be disappointing to realize that you are replaceable, you'll quickly discover more opportunities once you have to find a new job. Twice, I've given a 4-week notice with nothing else lined up, and have had a job offer by the last week of work. Discovering that you can rely on your skills to find a new job, or even a temp job, will help you get over the fear of losing a future job.

If you plan properly, you can even take extra time to reboot your brain further. I've often taken the opportunity to enjoy extra time off between jobs to reboot my brain. How did I get that time? I asked. The worst the new job could have said was no, and then I probably would have started earlier or considered alternative options.

What is the worst that can happen?

When you step up to ask a question, what is the worst that can happen? When you ask for a raise, what is the worst that can happen? If you ask for a sabbatical or unpaid time off, what is the worst that can happen? Most likely, the worst possible answer will be no – the person doesn't have time to answer your question, or can't, or the company can't provide a raise or extra time off. As you work towards conquering whatever it is you are afraid of, evaluate what the worst is that can happen. If it is just that you might get a no, be ok with that possibility and take that step. Or, if you need to, make a contingency plan so you can work up to what you want to achieve.

Fear is something that we all have to live with. My advice is to learn to conquer your fear slowly, through baby steps and experience, and achieve your goals.

As Nelson Mandela stated, "I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear." *Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela, Back Bay Books (1995).*

Jeanette Rogers, Assistant Manager of the IDL SIG, is an independent consultant living in the Pacific Northwest. She brought her folding bicycle to Philadelphia on an airplane and rode it around the city during the STC conference.

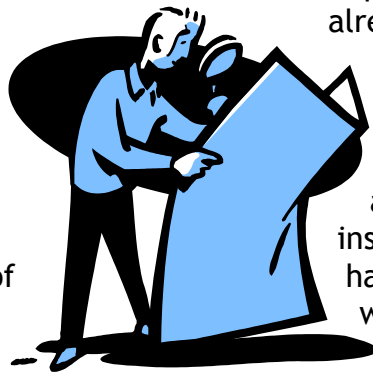# STC Annual Conference Review – Training Evaluation

by Jamye Sagan, IDL SIG Scholarship Manager

This past June, I attended my very first STC conference. From the moment I first heard about the conference – and my company gave the approval for me to go – I started plotting out my time in Philadelphia – from which workshops I would attend to when I would run up and down the same steps Rocky Balboa did. Since I work in training, I mostly chose workshops that dealt with this very topic. Of all the workshops I attended, the most valuable one to me was the training material evaluation.

In this workshop, you would submit a sample of your work to the evaluator in advance of the conference. The evaluator would then critically examine your work and prepare a detailed evaluation. During the workshop, you and the evaluator would meet in person to discuss your work – not only the mechanics of the sample itself, but also its history and intentions. Who is your target audience? What is their knowledge base? How and when is this work used? Then sometime after the workshop, the evaluator would send a formal recap of your discussion, paired with his or her feedback about the sample itself.

It takes a leap of faith to have an outsider closely examine and critique your work. But really, it is something we should always embrace in our profession as technical communicators. We become so intimate with our own work that we're deluded into thinking that once you view our meticulously-drawn graphs and read our succinct summaries you will instantly gain the knowledge of the entire universe. But you know what? It takes a different perspective to remind us that perhaps there is a better way of stating procedures, or that we left out an important step we assumed our readers already knew.

Some of the suggestions presented in my evaluation were concepts I already knew about, but had never applied in a certain way. For instance, I know about flowcharts, and have used them quite frequently in my work. But I never thought of inserting them into my job aids to explain procedures. What a simple—yet profound—concept. Again, sometimes it takes another person to help you make the realization. As the old saying goes, "two heads are better than one". When we collaborate, 1 + 1 equals more than 2.

Overall, I found this workshop to be quite useful. In fact I recommend that everyone takes part in such an experience. If you could not do so during the conference, then perhaps you could do something like this in your local chapter, or even at your job. Although I have worked in technical communication for seven years I still find great benefit in having someone else evaluate my work. In time, I plan to return the favor to another fellow technical communicator whether at work or a conference.

A FEW DAYS IN THE LIFE OF AN

STC IDL SIG TEAM MEMBER
AT THE SUMMIT

By Cynthia Silversides, Volunteer Manager

Monday, June 2nd, 2008
STC's 55th Annual Technical Summit did not disappoint! Our Opening Keynote Speaker that morning, **Howard Reingold**, has been described as a "visionary." [Reingold](#) delivered a compelling talk about digital media and learning with a focus on the merger of mobile communications. He was basically talking about social media today and speculating on how we will communicate in the future. Reingold spoke of current communication tools such as forums, wikis, and [blogs](#). He also stressed when it comes to social media that we should "Keep up with literacy, not technology."

After an hour or so of free time perusing the expo booths, I attended the **SIG Networking Lunch**. It was wonderful to meet many of our **IDL SIG** members and also some of our future **IDL Leadership Team** members, like **Gary Samartino** from Philadelphia, who is joining us as our new Treasurer, and **Maralee Sautter** who will be sharing the Secretary position with **Mary Ryba Knepper** for 2008/2009.

Choosing sessions throughout the course of the Summit is always a challenge when there are so many great sessions from which to choose. This certainly is a good thing! Since I am an instructional designer, I decided to attend all of the **Instructional Design Institute** sessions.

After lunch, I attended the first of five institute sessions with **Karl Kapp** from Bloomsburg University, "Matching the Strategy to the Content." This was an outstanding session in which [Kapp](#) posed the question, "Is there a change in performance as a result of a learning event?" He got into the nitty-gritty about facts, concepts, rules, procedures, principles, and problem-solving. Kapp gave us his universal rules:

- Appropriate use of assessment questions
- Distributed practice (as opposed to cramming)
- Focus on job specific performance

The next institute session was with **Jane Bozarth**, North Carolina's self-appointed "E-Learning Goddess". This session entitled, "Instructional Design for the Real World," examined the **ADDIE** model and the fact that it never seems to be linear in the real world. [Bozarth](#) suggested that the **Evaluation** step happens throughout each project cycle as you **Analyze**, **Design**, **Develop**, and **Implement**. According to Bozarth, the key is figuring out how to assess performance and to create assessments early on.

For dinner, **Jeanette Rogers** (former SIG Treasurer and new Assistant Manager for 2008/2009), **Nina Murdoch** (Programs Manager), and I enjoyed a meal out at [Tequilas Restaurant](#) which came highly recommended to me by one of our local SIG members. It was muy bien (very good)!

Tuesday, June 3rd, 2008
Bright and early I headed out to the IDL SIG business meeting. **Karen Baranich** (former Assistant SIG Manager) had us break the ice by writing a metaphor about our conference experience and poetry about our metaphor (if you were not there and are curious, email me and I will send you mine!). During this meeting, we found more leadership

team members for our SIG…
Carol Widstrand is going to be our Membership Manager and **Jamye Sagan** will be our Scholarship Manager. One of our new SIG members from Philadelphia, **Karen Flam**, volunteered to work on discussion calls and already has one in the works for September. Thank you to all who have so graciously taken on roles to make the IDL SIG continue to flourish.

The third institute session was an advanced topic, "Five Critical Success Factors for Converting Instructor-led Training into E-learning," by **Susan Boyd**. A successful consultant and dynamic speaker, [Boyd] broke down her critical success factors for us:

- Driving forces
- Needs analysis
- Redesign content
- Learner empowerment
- Evaluate and enhance

That afternoon **Susan Boyd** presented the next institute session, "Compliance and Regulatory Training." She talked about training challenges in reference to content, management, and learners. For e-learning Boyd suggested giving the learner control when dealing with boring content. Another tip is to create a "get started kit" including a short bio of learners to create a community amongst learners. Boyd said, "Do something out of the ordinary to make [training] meaningful and engaging."

The final institute session was "Unclog the Brain Bandwidth" with **Jane Bozarth**. She showed us through a series of slides that our working memory is limited and how:

- People learn better with words + pictures than with words alone
- Graphics are most effective explained with audio, not text
- Text describing graphics is most effective when integrated into the graphic, not underneath

When describing extraneous cognitive load, Bozarth mentioned Ruth Clark's book, [Efficiency in Learning]. In the end, Bozarth gave us some simple advice about designing e-learning, "Know when it is good enough and don't add unnecessary elements."

Wednesday, June 4th, 2008

The IDL SIG progression was held on the last day of the Summit. I only wish there was enough time during the session to sit in on all of the topics instead of just three! Our fearless leader, **Jackie Damrau** (current SIG Manager), presented "Using Graphics in Training Materials." **Sylvia Miller**, our Scholarship Manager for 2007/2008 presented "Developing a Topic-Specific Training Plan," and **Neil Perlin** presented "eLearning Support in Captivate" to give you an idea of the type of topics covered. All these presenters bestowed much wisdom in the short time-frame allotted.

This year's Summit was even better than my first which was last year. I highly recommend you mark the dates May 3rd-6th, 2009 on your calendar and make plans to attend the **STC 56th Annual Technical Summit in Atlanta, Georgia** next year. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Images: Philadelphia

STC IDL SIG: A Community of Distiction!

Photos by Sylvia Miller

Neil Perlin "Captivating" his Audience

Newletter Editor Robert Hershenow

IDL SIG Treasurer Gary Samartino

Jeanette Thomas, Robert Brown, Bryce Walat, Barbara Ridley, Joan Oliver, and Cynthia Silversides

Sylvia Miller and Karen Flam

Beth Bailey presenting at the IDL SIG Progression

IDL SIG Business Meeting

By Karen Baranich

A bleary-eyed but dedicated group of about 25 attended this year's SIG Business Meeting. Our SIG is required to hold one face-to-face meeting each year and it's usually scheduled for early one morning during the Annual STC Conference. After an icebreaker exercise, we got down to business. First on the agenda was our budget report. Then Jackie Damrau introduced new Assistant Managers, Jeanette Rogers and Chris Harding, who was not able to attend the conference.

Following those two items of business, we broke into groups to consider strategies that we can use for delivering services to our members during the next year. One of the following four topics was assigned to small groups for consideration:

1. Suggested topics for web seminars,
2. Strategies for a virtual workshop or mini-conference
3. Discussion Calls
4. Scholarships

Finally, the entire group discussed the question, "What should the IDL SIG do for you?" A summary of the small-group discussions follows:

Web Seminar – the attendees felt that the method used to select topics and speakers was working. There were concerns about cost and these echoed those expressed by the members in our survey. Our members would like to have the webinars delivered at very low cost (or no cost). The group also felt that we need an easy to use and reliable tool for the delivery of programs. Suggested topics include:

- Standards
- Improving IDL skills (may be a good topic for online workshop)
- Cost of developing training (ROI)
- Emerging technologies

The group suggested that topics be selected for webinars and discussion calls by gleaning what questions are asked more often and by using a survey tool to determine interests.

Workshop/Conference – This planning group recommended a workshop of two to three hours in length at a reasonable cost to members (they did not put a dollar figure on "reasonable cost".) They did recognize that issues with timing would need to be resolved especially if the event were held during working hours. Topics of interest would be tools and emerging technologies. One suggestion included setting up a lab that attendees could use to see if an application is useful in their environment. Even if the full functionality were not there, people felt that there would be value to such a program.

When asked if there was interest in a mini-conference, particularly one scheduled as a follow up to the STC Annual Conference, the response was negative. "We already have enough ID at this conference and would not want to stay longer for an add-on," was the reply. "Some people who can't make this conference would miss out on a connected mini-conference," they explained. Attendance at any IDL sponsored event, they felt, would depend on the location. There was more interest in a webcast or virtual conference than an on-site event.

Discussion Calls – The group recommended that discussion calls be

held twice a year – preferably in September in April. These calls, they said, should be of short duration, organizational in nature and start on the quarter hour instead of the hour or half-hour. The calls should be free to members, or at a minimal charge of no more than five dollars. The time and date for the calls should be determined by a member survey. One topic that was suggested was a recap of this conference for the benefit of people that didn't get to attend.

Scholarships – Group members wanted to see scholarships for things other than tuition payment. For example, they suggested a conference scholarship, a webinar scholarship, and funding for professional development taken outside of a degree program. Some plans and guidelines will have to be developed for qualifications, amounts, and benefits to the SIG.

IDL SIG Election Results!

During May 2008, the IDL SIG of the Society for Technical Communication held its annual election. Nominees for Assistant Manager, Christopher Harding and Jeanette Rodgers, tied with 93.8% of the vote each. Congratulations Chris and Jeanette on your new leadership roles for the IDL SIG!

Continues, next page...

We'd Like Your Input!

Thought Leader Interviews
From time to time we publish interviews with leaders and innovators in the field of Instructional Design, and we invite these people based on input from our membership. Who would you like to hear from? Let us know.

Articles
Most of our articles are written by members… why not you? One of the best things about our SIG community is that we can all benefit from each other's experience.

Tips and Hints
There's more than one way to do just about anything, and maybe your way is the next big thing. Or maybe it's just better than my way. Got a favorite process that saves you time every day? Why not share it?

Letters to the Editor
How do you like the IDeaL newsletter? How could we make it better? Was there an article or feature you enjoyed (or didn't)? Tell us about it!

Send your comments, requests, or opinions to newsletter@stcidlsig.org.

STC Mission
The Society for Technical Communication advances the theory and practice of technical communication across all user abilities and media.

Visit the STC online at www.stc.org

Jeanette Rogers

Jeanette Rogers was the IDL SIG treasurer since 2005 and helped set up the SIG's bank and PayPal accounts, PO box, and its process for handling webinar payments and expense reimbursements. Jeanette has been an active member of the SIG for 4 years now.

In addition to her service to the IDL SIG, Jeanette has been a judge for the Puget Sound Chapter'sTechnical Communications Competition. She has also presented at the 2005, 2006 and 2007 STC Conference and was an evaluator in the Training Evaluation Workshop in 2008.

Jeanette Rogers is a freelance instructional designer in Seattle, Washington. She designs and delivers training material for international audiences and is currently investigating new ways to address international considerations in online and computer-based training programs. Jeanette received her Master's degree in Education from Stanford University and has ten years of instructional design experience.

Christopher Harding

Christopher's journey in Instructional Design began when he was asked to teach a semester of a Technical Writing Fundamentals course for a local community college. Prior to the first session, he partnered with a college mentor who provided timely direction and guidance in effectively delivering instruction in a face-to-face environment.

It was then that he learned about the "ADDIE" model, elements of learning design, effective implementation and so on. Teaching in the classroom also provided a perfect environment for Christopher to discover a few distinctions between Training and Learning. To Christopher, the former meant pushing the instruction and the latter came to mean more of a welcoming embrace in instructional style.

A longtime member of the STC, Christopher joined the Instructional Design & Learning SIG for discussions with his contemporaries about current ID & L events, ID tools du jour, and a multitude of issues confronting ID. He discovered new and different methods of instructional delivery, most notably e-Learning. Christopher evaluated rapid ID tools such as Camtasia® and Captivate®. He learned about Learning Content Management Systems and how to implement them. In the ensuing years, he acquired a small number of clients with specific learning requirements that enabled Christopher to go deeper into the world of Instructional Design.

It was obvious to Christopher that his career was moving along a parallel but decidedly different path than Technical Writing alone, so he joined the Canadian Society for Training & Development (CSTD) as well as the eLearning Guild. Since 2006, Christopher has been pursuing a certificate in Adult Learning (e-Learning specialization) with the University of Calgary. To add to his credentials, he is in the process of obtaining his certificate as a Training & Development Professional with the CSTD.

A First–Timer's Impression

By Sonja Powell

Photo: Sylvia Miller

I hope that, as a first-time Summit attendee, my impressions could be helpful in planning future conferences by highlighting specific topics, formats and contributions that were of significance and value.

Impressions

1. The agenda, content, schedule and synopsis of sessions received in advance was helpful in planning the limited amount of time available for me to spend at the Summit (regrettably, only 2 days—Sunday and Monday)

2. Kiosks were staffed to provide general information, directions to persons and events of interest (though they were not signed as such)

3. On-site registration was welcoming, cheery, smooth, easy –wonderful first in-person encounter to the organization

4. Varied formats for presentation of content at education sessions is an excellent idea – no doubt, demonstrating lessons learned and ably applied from research and experience in our field

5. List of attendees available by geographic region & chapter is very helpful in enabling members to locate and connect with local-area colleagues, as well as any others with whom they may wish to interact professionally

6. Space was ample & well-lighted for each exhibit

Continues, next page…

Specific topics of interest

It was my great good fortune to have met Executive Director Susan Burton at the Summit. I was especially delighted to have had that opportunity to share with her information about particular project work of UNLV PWCP. The project draws on many of the current initiatives of the national STC task force and working groups, as well as her own efforts, in developing BoK taxonomy and updating DoL/BLS classifications and definitions of "technical communication". [The UNLV PWCP website project referenced her writings in STC publications.].

This was all the more enlightening because of the apparent lack of awareness within the Las Vegas technical writers' community about the national organization's focus on this core issue. And yet, the UNLV PWCP project work, the culmination of the Spring 2008 Electronic Documents and Publications course under Dr. Julie Staggers, corresponds well with the national organization's efforts.

Orientation of the UNLV class to the assigned work derived from a previous assignment requiring each student to describe purpose, audience, theme, style and content in a proposal for "… a website that in some way serves the needs of students in the Professional Writing Certificate Program at UNLV."

The stated objective of this final project work was to answer two questions in regard to how websites are created in a collaborative work effort and the role of writing in this process. What emerged out of the research and communications among class members & the ultimate usability testing was healthy prospect for more critical examination and revamping of curricular & other components of the UNLV PWCP itself, along the lines of the national STC's definition of areas of knowledge and key competencies in TC.

The STC Summit sessions on usability and user experience, as well as the very dynamic dialogues with and among other attendees, were invaluable in making me realize the need to re-direct my focus on document design to *how the user thinks*, and less on how I want the user to think, in navigating a website. For me, this was a crucial discovery. I plan to investigate this subject more over the upcoming academic year and beyond.

[I acknowledge the following STC Summit sessions as having been particularly invaluable for me: *Technical Communication Body of Knowledge I: A Framework for Moving Forward* and *Designing & Assessing User Experiences*, with Janice (Ginny) Redish et al; *Developing Your Skills and Promoting Your Profession*; *Emerging Technologies*; the BoK "Wall" in the Exhibit Hall; and Howard Rheingold's opening keynote speech.

By Carol Widstrand,
Membership Manager

This is my first IDL-SIG Members in the News column and I am just getting my feet wet. A big Thank You! goes out to Sylvia Miller, Jackie Damrau, Karen Baranich, Robert Hershenow, and others who are helping me get acclimated to my new role as Membership Manager.

With that said, I want you to know that this column is for you! We want to hear what our IDL SIG members are up to, so send me news about your work, accomplishments, promotions, and other good things happening with you. Your information helps us get to know each other since we are a virtual SIG and rarely get the chance to meet face to face.

Welcome New SIG Members
We hope to be reading about you in this column very soon!

Mr. Paul Aylworth
Linda Backo
Ms. Juliana Benedetti
Mr. Thomas Burke
Mrs. April Cain O'Neal
Brandon Chan
Miss Joanne Cornell
Glen Coulthard
Mrs. Erin Cunia
Mr. Robert Deveaux, Sr.
Ms. Kirsten Dockter
Ms. Martha Dunlap
Ms. Amy Engebretson
Susan Fanning
Ms. Gina G. Fevrier

Benjamin Green
Elaine Hairston
Ms. DL Henderson
Mr. Ryan Heuer
Mr. Miles Hoffman
Kevin Howard
Mr. Bill Janke
Deborah Johnson
Mr. Eric Johnson
Lisa Kerns
Ms. Carol Ketteridge
Mr. Joe Ketzner
Barb Leon
Miss Evelyn Low
Laurence May
Doug McIntire
Marina Michaels
Jeremy W. Miller
Mr. Daniel Milne
Mr. Devon Morgan
Ms. Sarah Morissette
Paul E. Oleksa
Ms. Eliane Pohl
Mr. Adam Rowe
Mrs. Angela Samuels
Michele Seugling
Ms. Ella Shtaif
Ms. Wilhelmina Snyder
Mr. John Stewart
Barry S. Stroud
Penny Sweetra
Mr. Alexander Tai
Ms. Tania Vieira
Mr. Chris Webb
Mrs. Meghan Webb
Ms. Beth Wendland
Mrs. Christy Wiggins

Member News from the 55th STC Conference
Here is a quick overview (listed alphabetically) of those who presented or made news at this year's conference in Philadelphia. If I missed anyone, please email me membership@stcidlsig.org so we can get it in the next issue of our

newsletter. If you would like to read or review their presentations go to http://www.stc.org/edu/55thConf/index.asp .

ELIZABETH BAILEY
Improving Organizational Performance; Managing Virtual Teams

PHYLISE BANNER
Information Visualization: Look at It This Way

KAREN BARANICH
IDL-SIG Progression Moderator – Innovative Instructional Design Practices

KIT BROWN
Managing Virtual Teams

SAUL CARLINER
Business Models for Technical Communication Departments

DAN CHARLES
Surviving the First Year as an Independent (CIC SIG Progression Moderator)

JACKIE DAMRAU
STC Leadership and LCR: The "WIIFM" Effect, Society Leaderships: Smooth Sailing or Rough Ride? - Panelist, IDL-SIG Progression - Using Graphics in Training Materials

KYLE DRANEY
Interviewing SMEs—Make Them Feel Valued

EVE DUMOVICH
Communicating and Creating Training for Disasters and Emergencies

RACHEL C. EICHEN
A Delicate Balance: Resolving Ethical Conflicts in Technical Communication

GLENN EMERSON
Real World Content Management

MARIANN M. FOSTER
Distance Education: Research on Improving the Experience and a Case Study for Beginning Development of Courses

ANN–MARIE GRISSINO
From Idea to Animation

LEAH GUREN
The ABCs of Documentation Usability Testing

MICHAEL HAMILTON
Advanced Print Publishing with MadCap Flare

MARK HANIGAN
Dissecting a Project Objective into Business Requirements and Use Cases; Technical Communication Body of Knowledge II: Open Forum for Discussion and Feedback

HOLLY HARKNESS
Managing Short-term or Freelance Employees

CHRIS HESTER
Evangelizing, Proselytizing, and Preaching: Strategies for Marketing Yourself and Your Expertise to Others; Creative? Me? But I'm a Technical Writer

SUE JACKSON
Editing Remotely

R.J. JACQUEZ
Making Sense of the FrameMaker and XML Alphabet Soup; Bringing the Video Revolution to Technical Communication

VIRGINIA C. JANZIG
Moving from One Style Guide to Another

CAROL LUTTREIL
Doing International Surveys

JEANNE MCCARTHY
Transitioning Success: An Academic in Industry Settings

NOELLE MCDONALD
Ten Tips for Managing Publications Projects

LINDA C. MIKKELSEN
Information Product Evaluation Workshop

SYLVIA MILLER
Developing a Topic-Specific Training Plan

NINA MURDOCH
The Science of Reading a Course Evaluation: an Introduction to Assessment Design, How Good are your Oracle Skills Assessment with UPK

NEIL E. PERLIN
Content Analysis Tools and Structured Authoring; What is Structured Authoring?; eLearning Support in Captivate

GLORIA A. REECE
Web-Spinning Digital Portfolios for Storytelling and Consulting; Accessible Training and Performance to Go: The Business Case for Improving Performance and eLearning

JEANETTE ROGERS
Training Evaluation Session

CAROLYN D. RUDE
Mapping the Research Questions in Technical Communication

SHERRY SHADDAY
Interviewing SMEs—Make Them Feel Valued

KEVIN A. SIEGEL
Job Convergence 2008: Adobe's TC Suite Is Blurring the Production Lines; Become Robo-Like Efficient with RoboHelp 7

CYNTHIA SKAWINSKI
Dissecting a Project Objective into Business Requirements and Use Cases

JANE SMITH
Awarded the *Distinguished SIG Service Award Innovative Instructional Design*

Practices for her outstanding efforts in reviving our SIG by providing virtual services to meet the needs of the SIG's membership

SUZANNE SOWINSKA
Guiding Principles for Content Publishers at Microsoft; Business and Management Challenges for Content Publishing Teams at Microsoft

AMBER R. SWOPE
Creating Task-based Navigation with DITA

KRISTY M. TAYLOR
Getting Inside Information on Collaboration
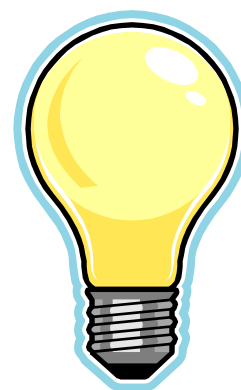
JANE WATROUS–MCCABE
Awarded the Distinguished *SIG Service Award Innovative Instructional Design Practices* for her dedication and commitment to the promotion of instructional design ideals as well as her outstanding service to our SIG.

CAROL WIDSTRAND
Awarded "Distinguished Technical Communication" for her training entry "Home Oxygen Use"

CHERYL LOCKETT ZUBAK
Getting Inside Information on Collaboration

Scholarship News

By Sylvia A. Miller

Christine Crawford is a Master's candidate at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, ND. The judges were immensely impressed with Christine's forward-thinking research and work. Her interest in instructional design budded when she worked as a program coordinator for the Occupational Therapy (OT) program at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis, TN. Here she "supported the expansion of the OT program to distance education, supporting university faculty in Web-based instruction." From there, her interest in instructional design grew to become a passion.

Christine submitted the following article last month for publication in *IDeaL: Design for Learning.*

Dear Scholarship Committee,

Please accept my gratitude for your generosity in awarding me the 2008 Scholarship for IDL SIG. I am very excited to share my work with you.

My bachelor's degree is in Sociology with a minor in Psychology. I am currently completing a master's degree in Instructional Design and Technology (IDT) at the University of North Dakota. My interest in IDT began while I was working as a program coordinator for the Occupational Therapy (OT) program at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis, TN. I supported the expansion of the OT program to distance education and learned that other universities had relied heavily upon their instructional design departments to facilitate their implementations. My original goal for a degree in IDT was to support university faculty in web-based instruction. My interest in learning and designing processes has since grown into a passionate desire to contribute to the body of knowledge and scholarship in the field.

I have many research questions, but those that I have focused on thus far center around virtual worlds. My work in the virtual world Second Life began with an internship with the Center for Instructional and Learning Technologies at UND. After investigating the potential for using SL as a learning tool I took a graduate course through Boise State University entitled "Teaching and Learning in Second Life" taught by Ann Jeffery and Mauri Collins. As part of the requirements for that course I collaborated with Len Thurman, an instructional designer from Pima Community College, to create an interactive and, we hope, immersive, orientation experience called *Kuttara Zen Avatar Training Trail (KZ)*. As we continue to refine and expand we hope to conduct research on questions related to new residents in SL.

You can visit KZ at http://slurl.com/secondlife/Kuttara/119/61/21. Other research in SL has been submitted to grant review and if approved will begin this summer. If you're interested in reading about more of my work try my blog at http://silvertomorrow.wordpress.com.

Thanks again,

   Christine Crawford

IDL SIG Web Seminars

A number of excellent web seminars are archived on the IDL SIG Web site:

Accelerated Learning:
The Extreme Training Makeover
Beverly Tester and Maggie Haenel-

A proven learning system designed to speed up and enhance both the training design and the learning process with a focus on reducing relevant expenses while maximizing performance in the classroom.

Increasing Activity in Webinars
Thiagi (Dr. Sivasailam Thiagarajan)

Everyone agrees that an interactive teaching environment is important -- and most expensive tools all too often fall short of their technological promises. So in contrast, Thiagi shares a set of principles and procedures that increase and improve interactivity – affordably!

Successful ID: Where Teory and Practice Meet
Michael Tillmans

Cognitive psychology has a lot to tell us about how people learn. It's up to us to use those findings to create interesting and challenging learning materials for our clients. This webinar will identify the key research findings that apply to most common types of learning situations - information, concepts, principles/problem solving, procedures and attitudes - and match them with teaching templates that can be used for instructors, print, or online learning.

Ware in the World
Richard Brown

Brown will provide an overview of what a virtual training environment looks like, and then demonstrate how it can be used to reduce training costs, save student setup time, and improve course reliability without having to rely so heavily on the I.T. department.

Register on the IDL SIG Web site.

More seminars are in the works! We'll provide more information as it becomes available, so check the Web site and keep an eye on your inbox.

Also of interest to Instructional Design & Learning SIG members:

STC remote web seminars.
http://www.stc.org/seminarsList.asp

These organizations also hold events that are related to instructional design & learning:

American Society for Training & Development (ASTD):
http://www.astd.org/astd/conferences/about_conferences

The eLearning Guild:
http://www.elearningguild.com/

International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI):
http://performance.ispi.org/source/meetings/meetingshome.cfm?section=events

Intercom Online

NEW MEMBER BENEFIT:
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STC is pleased to announce an exclusive member benefit—discounts on popular products frequently used by members in the performance of their tasks. The companies offering the initial discounts are participants in STC's Corporate Value Program.

STC appreciates the offerings by **MadCap Software** and **ComponentOne** and their continued support of STC activities. Member comments and feedback about the discounts are welcome.

MadCap Software is available at a 10% discount; Component One software at a 15% discount to STC Members. See the STC web site for details!

Intercom, the magazine of the STC (www.stc.org), is published to provide examples and applications of technical communication that will promote its readers' professional development.

To discuss Intercom articles on the STC Forum, please visit:
http://stcforum.org/viewforum.php?id=51

The STC Academic Database

To assist those interested in pursuing a career in technical communication, STC provides a database of academic programs worldwide:
http://stc.org/edu/academicDatabase01.asp