



Alamo Tech Line Newsletter



Meet Your 2008-2009 Alamo STC Committee Members

Heather Parsons – President

Heather has been working as a technical writer for 11 years and has worked as a contract writer for the past five years. Heather has been a member of STC since 1996. The fields in which she has worked include software and hardware technology, business process development, software life cycle methodology, medical administrative applications, education, and release/configuration management.

Carie Joyce – Program/Meeting Manager

Carie has a Master's in English with an emphasis in technical writing from Louisiana Tech University. She has been a technical writer for nine years. Currently, she is a Sr. Consultant for Miller Consulting Services. She works with clients from several different petroleum companies to execute a variety of regulatory compliance documentation projects (e.g., Integrity Management for Hazardous Liquid, Gas, and Offshore Pipelines, Operations and Maintenance Manuals, etc.). She will be presenting "Preparing for Integrity Management Inspections: Strategies for Success and Survival" with a co-worker to the American Gas Association in May. She hopes she can provide interesting topics for the meetings and fun networking opportunities.

Angie Stock- Job Bank Manager

Angie has provided documentation for her franchise business, for her last project, and for Harcourt (now Pearson) for approximately least six years. She has written personnel manuals, brochures, study guides, help file documentation, website documentation, and, most recently, a government assessment pertaining to improving work standards. Angie is currently searching for employment. She most recently worked with ICDB-Genesis Contracting, where she compiled an Integrated Clinical Database Assessment. She obtained a BA in Communication with a concentration in Electronic Media from UTSA. She plans to provide job postings on a weekly basis and report/newsletter summaries pertaining to job hunting and/or employment searches.

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NEXT MEETING

May 13: Grant writing is for the Creative mind. Have fun with it, but hold back that pen! Find out grant writing essentials and how to market yourself.

Date: May 13, 2008

Time: 6:30 p.m. Networking;
7:00 p.m. Program

Location: Cody Library,
11441 Vance Jackson, San
Antonio 78230, (210) 696-
6396

About the speaker: Evamay



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Debbie Wood – Treasurer

As the new Treasurer for the Alamo Chapter, Debbie has three main goals. She hopes to help the other leaders achieve their goals for the chapter. She wants to maintain the financial records in an orderly and professional manner, and she wants to submit our financial reports to STC in a timely manner.

Debbie has been a technical writer since 1987, when she went to work for AT&T's Technical Training Center in Dublin, Ohio. After she moved back home to San Antonio, she went to work for Karta Technology. Debbie then worked for several companies before she became an independent contractor/consultant in 1998. Debbie gave that up last year and is now working a long-term contract for USAA. She has written mostly hardware and software manuals, but she has also written training, policies and procedures, and various other types of documents.

Debbie joined STC in 1994 and became involved in the Alamo Chapter in 1995. In addition to being your Treasurer, she is currently the Past President of the chapter. In the past, she has won awards as the Newsletter Editor.

Ricky Davis –Webmaster/Newsletter Editor

Ricky's goal is to provide a forum to provide information to expand our knowledge as technical writers, expanding our website to include sharing knowledge by encouraging blog posts, and providing a newsletter for our members.

I am a student at Kaplan University Online pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Communication with an emphasis in Technical Writing. I am in my sophomore year. I am currently unemployed. I moved to San Antonio in October, my partner has obtained a job at USAA.

Daisy Thames – Public Relations/Advertising

Watts has over 20 years experience and progressive responsibility in management, accounting, and budgeting. She currently serves as Sr. Vice President of Fiscal Operations at San Antonio Fighting Back (SAFB), where the organization serves to prevent substance abuse, alcohol, and tobacco use. She is responsible for all Fiscal Operations of the agency as well as personnel and grant management. She manages a \$1.7 million dollar budget and over 13 programs and 19 personnel.

What are your strengths?

Book Review/Article by
Angie Stock, Job Bank
Manager: STC Alamo
Chapter

*Strength does not come
from physical capacity. It
comes from an indomitable
will.*

--Mahatma Gandhi

Are you ever challenged by updating your resume to reflect your true strengths? If not, good for you! If so, many are among you, including me. With recent time on my hands, I decided



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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Many things have happened in the Alamo Chapter STC within the past three and a half months. I've been participating on and off in the chapter for about twelve years now. But did you know that Debbie Wood has been a board member of our chapter for eleven years? Yes, she has been a leader in our group, most recently President, for many years and we owe her a great deal of gratitude for the work she has done.

At our April 8 meeting, the chapter presented Debbie with a leather portfolio to thank her for her service in the Chapter. Debbie decided to step down from the role of President in January in order to pursue other efforts, but, even though she is no longer serving as President, she is not leaving the chapter. Instead, she decided to volunteer as our Treasurer. Way to go, Debbie!

Other news we have is the organization of a new team of volunteers for the chapter. After extreme twisting of my arms and some other techniques (i.e., free dinner), I decided to volunteer for the role of President. Since February, we have put together a great team that is ready to support you.

Our new team members are:

- Heather Parsons, President
- Daisy Thames, Public Relations and Advertising
- Angie Stock, Job Bank Manager
- Ricky Davis, Web Site and Newsletter Editor
- Debbie Wood, Treasurer

I'm sure you have noticed, but our Web Site and Newsletter Editor, Ricky Davis, has been working hard to put a new site together, and he is also responsible for coordinating and designing our newsletter. The new web site has several feeds from the Austin and Houston chapters and other information that I'm sure you'll find informative and useful.

The web site also has a page specific to jobs in the San Antonio area. These are posted by our Job Bank Manager, Angie Stock. Be sure to keep your eye on this page because it is updated frequently. If you have a

to hit the bookstores and peruse their employment/job sections. It can be overwhelming whether you know what you want to do, don't know what you want to do, or would like to look into another potential career.

For anyone wanting to learn more about their strengths, I suggest reading Strengths Finder 2.0, by Tom Rath. The book is meant to assist individuals to find their strengths rather than eliminating their weaknesses. It's considered to be an updated version of the Now, Discover Your Strengths, by Marcus Buckingham & Donald O. Clifton, Ph.D. The new version is more compact and elaborates further on "The 34 Themes and Ideas for Action." The Gallup Polls originally based their findings on 40 years of studying human strengths



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job lead, feel free to contact Angie directly to have it posted on the site.

Daisy Thames is advertising our meetings in the Express News and several other sources. She is also a great person to talk to if you need ideas on anything. She has often suggested meeting topics, speakers, and job leads.

And, of course, Debbie Wood is managing our funds and helping us come up with financial goals for the year. This is a very important function for our chapter because we want to provide the best service at the most appropriate cost.

As for myself, I'm here to support our new team, find speakers for meetings, and support our chapter members. If you have any ideas for meetings that you'd like to see scheduled, feel free to contact me or Carie. If you want information on the chapter or STC in general, I'd be happy to talk to you on the phone or over email.

Carie Joyce has been setting up our program meetings for this year; however, she will be moving to Dallas in the next couple of month. We're very grateful for her help and friendship!! We're going to try something new this year...socials on Fridays. Carie is setting one up for this summer, so be sure to look for them.

We're here for you and really want to see your involvement in the chapter as a member attending meetings or as a volunteer. If you are interested in volunteering, we have short stints of volunteer work available (like setting up the chairs at meetings or calling members to remind them of upcoming meetings). All volunteers and meeting attendees are very welcome and greatly appreciated!

Looking forward to seeing you at the next meeting on May 13.

Heather Parsons
President

through interviewing two million people. The new version has a sealed code (only good for one test) that gains access to the strength finding assessment on the Internet. It takes about 30 minutes and they suggest taking the test when you are at your best. Once you have your results, you can preview the top 5 themes of your strengths and discover how to apply them. The results describe what a strength theme may sound like, what it may display, and give you 10 ideas for action on how to use it more wisely find purpose for it. At the end of the results you can use the "Strengths-Based Action Plan" to use your strengths on a weekly, monthly, and yearly basis. The template can be useful for applying your strengths professionally and personally.

For those who would like more facts about the book, the original version can be found at libraries. Also available



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April 8TH Meeting in Review

At our meeting on April 8, we had speaker, Dr. Tim Peterson, who is a doctor at De Zavala Chiropractic in San Antonio. This is the first non-technical communicator we have had as a speaker in a while; however, his talk greatly applied to what we all do. Because we often have jobs where we sit at a computer for several hours a day, it is important to incorporate some of his suggestions for good health.

Dr. Peterson spoke to us about the importance of our health and weight to our minds, bodies, and spirit. He shared details on why people suffer from severe problems, such as diabetes, obesity, depression, anxiety, and heart problems. He also shed light on why we have less severe problems, like mood swings, headaches, stomach problems, and other common ailments.

Basically, the condition of our bodies affects our every day life. What we put in our bodies and the stress in our lives affects everything about "us" (i.e., our weight, our ability to handle stress, our memory, our ability to process food, and many more).

Dr. Peterson advised that exercising 30 minutes a day seven days a week is a great thing to not only lose weight, but also to improve our overall outlook on life and ability to handle stress. He said that 30 minutes of exercising did not have to be an all out sweat-fest; it just has to be something that gets you moving, like walking. He said that exercise is not a short-term solution...it is a way of life and a way to ensure you have a longer life.

One trick he gave us about calories and food was to determine the number of calories you should eat in a day by multiplying your "goal" weight by 10. So, if you want to weigh 150 pounds, you should eat 1500 calories a day. If you have a lot of weight to lose, this should be done in increments of 10 or 20 pounds, not all at once.

Another method to weight loss he mentioned was that we should be eating 65% vegetables and fruit a day. Because our bodies can only absorb four ounces of water an hour, it is important to drink water throughout the day. I started doing that this week and have lost one pound already!

Dr. Tim Peterson has been speaking to communities in Austin, Amarillo, and San Antonio since 1997. His vision is to give people a new

at the library, are the accompanying CD's (for the morning or evening commute.) The first version supplies more factual reasons of why focusing on our strengths is more fitting to achieve success, rather than focusing on or trying to improve on our weaknesses.

The information in these books briefly connects some benefits that employers can gain by plugging their employees into more fulfilling, yet suitable job roles. I actually was surprised at some of the employee role descriptions and why certain talents are better suited for various job positions. Many employee stories on the cds do not fit the normal academic employment search.

Their website also provides downloadable discussion guides and activities, a strengths community element, and a program for creating display cards for your top 5 themes. Mainstream bookstores price the book between \$15-\$20



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perspective on health and how our bodies are designed to effectively deal with it. Since coming on staff with De Zavala Chiropractic, Dr. Peterson has been reaching out to the community in many ways, but community wellness education takes the highest priority. Over the past eleven years, he has spoken to businesses, civic clubs, support groups, fire departments, post offices,



Technology is ever changing and we as IT professionals have to continually learn and stay abreast of the new changes. Right now Web 3.0 has no real definition it is just a term used to describe what could happen. Various individuals have come up with their own theory of what Web 3.0 will be.

Nova Spivack, Ceo and Founder of Radar Networks, has given the most comprehensive definition of what Web 3.0 could be:

“Web 3.0, expected to debut in 2007, will be more connected, open, and intelligent, with semantic Web technologies, distributed databases, natural language processing, machine learning, machine reasoning, and autonomous agents.” (Nova Spivack [The Third-Generation Web is Coming](#), *KurzweilAI.net*, December 17, 2006)

The Open Web

Open Source

Software programs like MediaWiki and Mozilla Firefox are open source software where anyone can use the software for free and also have access to the code of the software to add to its functionality. This can improve the web by allowing everyone to participate in sharing their knowledge to better software. (It is also great way for to learn programming, to see code already in action)

Open Identity

No more creating different screen names and passwords. With Web 3.0 it will be possible to carry over your user account from one site to another.

Increased Bandwidth

Reed Hastings, founder and CEO of Netflix, stated a simpler formula for defining the phases of the Web:



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“ Web 1.0 was dial-up, 50K average bandwidth, Web 2.0 is an average 1 megabit of bandwidth and Web 3.0 will be 10 megabits of bandwidth all the time, which will be the full video Web, and

that will feel like Web 3.0.” (Dan Farber & Larry Dignan [TechNet Summit: The new era of innovation](#), *ZDNet blog*, November 15th, 2006)

The Intelligent Web

Semantic web technologies

Semantics is the study of meaning. Words and data can often mean different things for example the word sentence; it can mean a grammatical unit or a judgment of law. The semantic web would be a world-wide database

were technologies (programs) can decide what information means from different web resources and pull them together for whatever you are looking for. In web 2.0 we have to use our own skills to piece together information.

Getting the time for a flight at one site, getting the check in time of a hotel from another and reserving tickets for a movie from another. With the semantic web technologies, we can do everything from one resource that will scan the web for us and with artificial intelligence do it all. It would be reduce the time of research we could just tell one program all the information we want and it will scan the web and present to us what we asked for. The W3C (World Wide Web consortium) defines semantic web as:

The **Semantic Web** provides a common framework that allows **data** to be shared and reused across application, enterprise, and community boundaries. It is a collaborative effort led by W3C with participation from a large number of researchers and industrial partners. It is based on the Resource Description Framework ([RDF](#)) (retrieved from <http://www.w3.org/2001/sw/> on March 24, 2008).

The Technical Communication Summit is the primary source of learning and expanding your knowledge about technical communication. Over 3 1/2 days, the summit certificate programs, education sessions, keynote speakers and networking opportunities make the Summit the place you should be. Whether you're a novice or a senior practitioner, manager or researcher, the Summit caters to your need for education and professional growth!

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From The Editor:

The new Website and RSS feeds

The new Alamo Website is up and running. It is still a work in progress. As I learn more about WordPress and about HTML, I will be upgrading the site and adding new features. I have been exploring Google and have found they have some great features through Google Apps and Google Reader. If you have not seen the new website please take a look and provide any feedback you may have. It is not just the administrative committee's Website; it is also yours.

RSS feeds are a great way to keep up with information. All of our website blogs are compatible with most RSS readers. There are several ways to use RSS readers. You can download software that can be used as a RSS reader. Certain Websites also have the capability of being as a RSS Reader such as Google Reader without having to take up the space on your hard drive. You can add each page as a feed for the reader. If you want to track new jobs added to the Job Resource Page, you simply add /feed/ to the end of the URL name and add it to your RSS reader. (for the Job Resource page it would be <http://jobresources.wordpress.com/feed/>)

Using the RSS Feed, will save time, you can add RSS feeds from your favorite sites and have the information in one easy to see area instead of going to the different Websites.

If you do not have a RSS Reader, Google Reader is a good free source. I use the Google Reader because I already have a Google Account that I use for email and for sharing documents.

If you have any tips on any great web features that you would like to share please let me know.

Thanks

Ricky Davis

Alamo STC Webmaster and Newsletter Editor

(approximately) and I've seen the book available online for approximately \$13, but be sure the code has not been used or you will not be able to take the assessment.

Upcoming Live Web Seminars

May 14th

Determine your
Departments Destiny

May 15th

Doing More with Less:
Using Topic-Based
Content Development

May 28th

Writing Your Own Tools
and Utilities

For more information go
to the STC's Live Web
Seminar Home Page at

<http://www.stc.org/edu/seminars01.asp>

MAY 2008



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The logo for the Society for Technical Communication (STC), consisting of the letters 'STC' in a bold, sans-serif font. The 'S' and 'T' are white, and the 'C' is yellow.

Alamo Tech Line

Alamo Tech Line is the official newsletter of the Alamo Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC), and is published monthly. It is available to all chapter members and is also available as a PDF file at the Alamo Chapter web site.

Alamo Chapter STC Web Site

www.alamostc.org

Editor

Ricky Davis, Newsletter Editor

email: editor@alamostc.org

Submissions and Deadlines

Please send submissions to the Editor. Submissions in Microsoft Word 2003, or text are appreciated. All submissions may be edited for clarity and length. Deadlines for submission are by the 20th of the previous month for publication in the following month.

Reprints

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