

**In This Issue...**

- 2 Currents/  
Job Bank
- 3 Regional News
- 4 Calendar
- 5 Directions

## Project Management

*She Ain't What She Used to Be*

**Shannon Thurman—Chapter President**

**A** formal definition of "project management" might be "applying knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet or exceed client needs and expectations." Certainly, even though project management is now considered a profession, all

of us in the technical communication field have used its tenets over and over.

It's not exactly a choice, is it?

Faced with a complicated project and an impossible deadline, one of the first things we do is structure the project to guarantee success for ourselves and our coworkers. Because of an interesting methodology I've been working on, I am more than just a little aware that project management involves so much more than the complicated project here and there.

Due to a dynamic business environment, American and international businesses are faced

with all sorts of challenges. It's not just difficult to manage a project successfully, but it's equally difficult to manage *many* projects successfully. This sort of management includes managing groups of projects with similar attributes; they're called "programs."

But the most important aspect of project management nowadays is looking at the big

picture—being able to examine the whole of your business, that vast array of individual projects and programs, and

analyzing how mega projects and the focus of your projects can help you achieve your business strategy.

Those days of filling out a work plan and hoping for the best are gone. We have different tools to consider, project leaders and team members who likely work out of different offices, different states, even different countries. No wonder project management is an up-and-coming profession.

Next week, we have a panel of STC professionals who will be discussing project management

and all its nuances. The panel will include representatives from Deloitte and Touche, Columbia/HCA, and Tanner Corporate Services. Some of the topics covered will be: project life cycles, working with freelancers, and scheduling and estimating. Please join us at Square D on Donelson Pike next Tuesday as we, once again, talk about a subject that is always of interest to the business community. ■

[See page 5 for directions to Square D]

M E E T I N G I N F O

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**What: Project Mgmt.**

**When: Tues. Nov. 11, 6 pm**

**Where: Square D Co.**

[see page 5 for directions]

### Newsletter Via E-Mail?

In case you missed the announcement in the last issue of *Communi-que*, you can now receive the newsletter via e-mail. We'll send the newsletter as an e-mail attachment in Adobe's PDF format? (You'll need Acrobat Reader 3.0.) If you are interested, send a "request for *Communi-que* via e-mail" to Jim Giordano at [giordanj@squared.com](mailto:giordanj@squared.com). The benefits of this are that you'll get the newsletter a day or two earlier and you'll get to view the newsletter in two glorious colors. You will no longer receive the newsletter via snail mail.

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## Atlanta Chapter Seeks Presenters

*For the Annual Currents Conference*

**Mary Menz—Conference Manager**

The Atlanta chapter of the Society for Technical Communication is currently accepting proposals for papers to be presented at its annual Currents conference, to be held in Atlanta March 21, 1998. The theme and focus of this year's conference is Informing the World.

Help us explore new ways to communicate with our world-wide audiences at the 10th annual conference. Potential presenters must submit a 100–300 word abstract for a 1.25 hour presentation. The deadline for submission is November 21 and selected presenters will be notified by December 19.

Visit the Atlanta chapter web site at [www.pobox.com/stc-atlanta](http://www.pobox.com/stc-atlanta) for complete proposal and submission requirements or contact Mary Anne Castranio at [maryanne.castranio@mapics.com](mailto:maryanne.castranio@mapics.com) or Mary Menz at

[marymenz@mindspring.com](mailto:marymenz@mindspring.com).  
The March 21 Currents conference will be preceded by a one-day workshop. The March 20 workshop "Writing for Usability" will be presented by Mr. Loren Burke and Mr. Mike Hughes, both of the Usability Lab, Atlanta. Currents, the annual regional conference of the Atlanta chapter, brings together technical communicators such as writers, editors, educators, engineers, programmers, illustrators, printers, scientists, publishers, information designers, and other kindred spirits throughout the southeast. The Atlanta chapter of the Society for Technical Communication is the sixth largest chapter, with nearly 660 members. ■

## The Job Bank

### Training Developer

Saturn Corporation  
Spring Hill, TN

Saturn Corporation is currently recruiting for a training developer to create both technical and interpersonal skill programs in a progressive industrial setting. We are looking for a person with strong writing and computer skills and 3-5 years experience designing, developing, and evaluating training programs and instructional materials. Bachelor's degree required. PC experience with Microsoft Word and Pagemaker a plus. This is a 40 hour per week contract position. Length of assignment is six months with a strong possibility of renewal. You may send your resume and cover letter to Tracy Robinson, Saturn Corporation, P.O. Box 1500, MD:371-999-G11, 100 Saturn Parkway, Spring Hill, TN 37174-1500. You may fax your resume and cover letter to (615) 486-6505, or you may e-mail them to [pstd@ix.netcom.com](mailto:pstd@ix.netcom.com). ■

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**Communiqué**—c/o Shannon Thurman, President, 4022 Sells Drive, Hermitage, TN 37076.

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**Submissions** are welcome in hard copy or as an e-mail attachment (preferred method). Send to: Jim Giordano, Square D Company, 295 Tech Park Drive, Suite 100, LaVergne, TN 37086. E-mail [giordanj@squared.com](mailto:giordanj@squared.com).

**Colophon**—This document was designed by Jim Giordano and created using Adobe Pagemaker 6.5 on a Macintosh. Fonts used include Century Gothic for body copy and headlines, and Adobe Garamond for deck heads and the Communiqué nameplate.

## Regional News and Views

*From the Region 3 Director/Sponsor*

**Michelle Ratcliffe—Director/Sponsor**

**B**eing a director-sponsor is really fun. I had the opportunity to visit two more chapters in region three this fall, the First Coast chapter in Jacksonville and the Atlanta chapter. Although these chapters are really different in size (Atlanta 500+, Jacksonville 50+), it is amazing how similar the meetings were. At both events, I found myself immersed in a crowd of exciting and interesting professionals who, like myself, attend STC meetings to learn, network, and have fun.

My First Coast visit was a trip up to celebrate the chapter's accomplishments in new member recruitment last year. It turned out to be a celebration of many other accomplishments as well, since this chapter is growing in leaps and bounds in the services they are providing and the energy of their leadership. They are growing in other ways also, CONGRATULATIONS to Harry Bottka, president of the chapter, and his family on the birth of their new daughter last month.

My Atlanta visit was a lucky break. My job takes me to Atlanta frequently, and I was lucky enough to have a trip

coincide with the chapter meeting night. The meeting program was phenomenal. It was a presentation by CNN Interactive about CNN's web site. The program provided insight into communication techniques, a perspective on future techniques, and very interesting facts about information consumption in other countries. Thanks to both chapters for great visits!

### Board Meeting Notes

This is a partial list of board actions taken in September:

A \$600 merit grant was given to the Iowa State University student chapter to support a daylong seminar on November 6, 1997

A \$3,000 seed money grant was given to the Bowling Green State University student chapter to help start the Kirk Foster Memorial Fund. The fund will help students attend the annual conference

The board voted to increase the amount of STC scholarships from \$2,000 to \$2,500. STC will continue to award fourteen scholarships per year, seven for undergraduates and seven for graduate students.

The board authorized the conference planning advisory committee to establish a maximum number of registrants each

year for the STC Annual Conference. The limit will be based on the seating capacity of the conference facility. The seating capacity at the 1998 conference in Anaheim is 4,000.

The Multimedia SIG and Visual Communications SIG will merge to form the Illustrators and Visual Designers SIG.

The next board meeting is January 22-24, 1998. Please contact me if you have any questions for the Board or if you have an actions to bring forward.

### Notable Notes

My work phone number is changing in November to accommodate a new phone system. My new number is 404-631-2303.

Have a great month! ■

*Michelle Ratcliffe*  
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## Mark Your Calendar

### *STC Meetings and Other Important Events That You Won't Want to Miss*

The Middle Tennessee Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication normally meets on the second Tuesday of the month. The tentative meeting schedule is shown below. Watch this newsletter for exacting meeting locations, dates, and times.

#### **Tentative Chapter Meeting Schedule**

November 11 Project Management  
 January Annual Twelfth Night Party  
 February Telecommuting

March Distance Learning  
 April Online and Publications Competition

#### **Other Dates to Remember**

November 22 Consensus Judging for Chapter Publications Competition  
 November 21 Call for Entries Deadline for Currents  
 January 15 Deadline for STC's Technical Video Competition  
 May 17-20 STC Annual Conference at Anaheim

## How Does Your Video Stack Up?

### *Enter STC's Technical Video Competition*

STC invites you to participate in its annual International Technical Video Competition (ITVC). The Society sponsors this competition to identify, recognize, and encourage excellence in the production of videotapes that communicate concepts related to technology, science, medicine, or government.

The ITVC is conducted exclusively at the Society level; there is no chapter-level judging. The accepted format for video entries is a single 1/2-inch VHS tape in one of the following categories: marketing, information, instruction, or public relations.

Entries must be received by January 15, 1998. Awards will be presented at STC's 45th Annual Conference in Anaheim, California, on May 17-20, 1998.

To receive an ITVC entry form and a copy of the competition rules, contact the Society office at (703) 522-4114 or stc@stc-va.org. The entry form and rules can also be printed from the Society office

Web site at <http://www.stc-va.org>. For further information about the competition, contact ITVC Manager Gary Heba at (419) 372-6835. ■

#### **Chapter Officers and Board**

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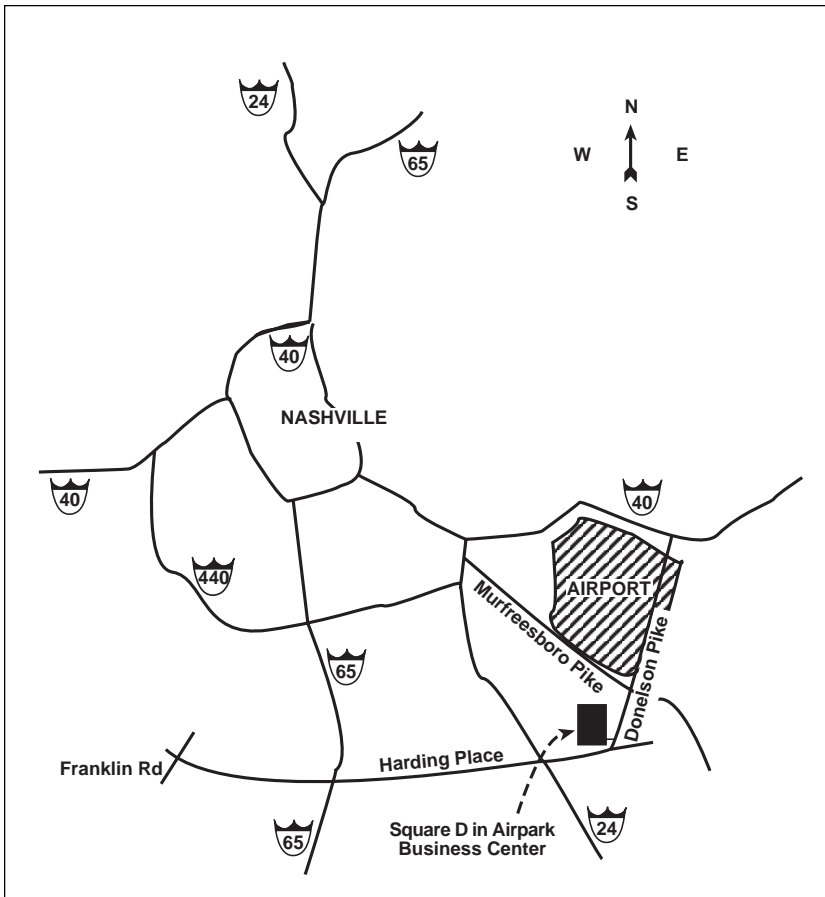
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## Directions to the Nov. Meeting

**Square D Company**  
1410 DONELSON PIKE, SUITE B-5

Directions From Downtown: East on I-24 toward Hickory Hollow. Get off at the Harding Place exit. Turn left onto Harding. Pass Sam's Wholesale then around a curve, then left onto Donelson Pike. The Airpark Business Center is immediately on the left. Turn left into the first entrance. The Square D building is on the right.



**SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS  
AVAILABLE**

Each year, STC offers scholarships to full-time graduate and undergraduate students pursuing careers in technical communication.

Fourteen awards of \$2,500 each will be granted for academic year 1998-99.  
**Application deadline is February 15, 1998.**

Application forms and instructions are available from the STC office:

901 N. Stuart Street, Suite 904  
Arlington, VA 22203-1854  
(703) 522-4114



**society for technical communication**

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Address Correction Requested