



SOCIETY FOR
TECHNICAL
COMMUNICATION

Newsbrief

Monthly Publication of the Mid-South Chapter

VOLUME 23/24, DECEMBER 2004/JANUARY 2005

January Meeting Program: Content Management

by April Cox

On Monday, January 3, the Mid-South chapter will hold a joint meeting with the Toad, a local nonprofit organization for technology professionals, users, and enthusiasts. Presenters Jeffrey Milton, Paul Ringger, and Tom Kirstein will discuss techniques and tools for content management, particularly for websites.

Content management is key to making sure that timely, accurate information is disseminated to your audience. Content management systems for websites enable individuals without a background in web development or the assistance of a webmaster to edit information on a website using templates and other tools such as wizards. These systems allow multiple users to search for, retrieve, replace, and index content. Passwords and levels of access can also be established so that not just anyone in an organization can make changes.

Our presenters have varied, extensive backgrounds in content management. Tom Kirstein, president of Mind Over Data, has been developing custom content management systems since 1998. He was also the technical project manager for International Paper's content-managed website, which rolled out in 2001. Jeffrey Milton, chief technology officer/creative director of GMOTION.com Inc., has experience with design and technical aspects of content management. He works to integrate content management systems into customers' daily workflow. Paul Ringger, president of Ringger Interactive, has been working almost exclusively with content management systems for the past five years but was involved with managing content even before the internet-explosion of the 1990s.

We hope that you'll join us and members of the Toad at the Cottage at the Four Seasons at 5:30 p.m. for networking and 6:30 p.m. for the presentation. For more details, see page 8. ♦

January Web-Telephone Seminar

Have you been feeling stressed on the job? Perhaps a project snuck up on you, or a timeline wasn't realistic. Maybe you and your co-workers don't share information, which leads to major problems. The STC Mid-South Chapter is hosting a web-telephone seminar on January 12 that will help solve your workday woes.

The seminar, "Preemptive Project Planning," will feature award-winning author and STC Fellow John Hedtke. This presentation will show you how to anticipate and plan for upcoming projects, communicate with your work group, track projects, check results, and impress management.

Join us at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, January 12, at the Homewood Suites at 3583 Hacks Cross Road for this excellent professional development opportunity. The seminar will last approximately 90 minutes, and the price is \$22 for members and \$27 for nonmembers. Lunch will be provided for those who register and pay by Tuesday, January 11 at 9 a.m. Register online today at <http://www.stc-midsouth.org>.

Contents

From the Editor.....	2
Member News	2
"Bright Ideas" for Adding Member Value	2
STC Dues Renewal: How Much and How to Pay	3
November Meeting Notes: Contract Working.....	4
One Step Closer to Independence: How to Develop a Fee Schedule	5
Letters	7
Upcoming Chapter Meetings	8
Other Meetings of Interest to Technical Communicators	8

From the Editor

by Apryl Cox

I hope that you've enjoyed the holidays. We on the Mid-South chapter board took a little break and did not hold our monthly board meeting. And as I'm sure many of you have noticed, I have combined the December and January issues of *Newsbrief* instead of putting out two issues during the holidays.

I hope that you're looking forward to the new year. If you've made a resolution to further your professional development, look on page 1 for details about our joint meeting with the local technology group the Toad on January 3 and our web-telephone seminar on project planning on January 12.

If you would like to take on some contract work this year, see pages 4 through 7. There is a great write-up by Gail Spake on the November meeting on contract working, followed by an article on setting your rates for contract projects.

Finally, remember to stay involved as an active member of the Society and the Mid-South chapter. See below for Alison Masilak's article on the "Bright Ideas" the board has for our chapter this year. You can also find information on renewing your dues on page 3.

As always, I hope see you at an upcoming meeting, like the one on Monday, January 3! ♦

Member News

Congratulations to Diana Fedinec! Diana, the publicity manager for the Mid-South chapter, works for Keep Tennessee Beautiful doing publicity and creating other documentation. She and her coworkers were honored when Keep Tennessee Beautiful won a Gold-Level State Affiliate Award at the December 2004 conference of Keep America Beautiful in Washington, DC.

"Bright Ideas" for Adding Member Value

by Alison Masilak, Mid-South Chapter Vice President

Last month, our chapter treasurer wrote an article about how we are adding member value by restructuring the way we charge for meetings. While the meeting charge is a visible and obvious way to show change, the administrative council has been implementing new programs and brainstorming ways we can better serve the needs of the Mid-South chapter.

In November, we held our first web-telephone seminar. These seminars are offered through STC and are typically held during the lunch hour on weekdays. In addition to giving all members a professional development opportunity, by hosting these daytime events, we are providing members who cannot attend nighttime meetings an alternative. As an added convenience, we have implemented online registration and payment via PayPal for the seminars. We are planning to hold another web-telephone seminar in January on project management.

We are exploring training opportunities with New Horizons for Saturday workshops, making use of their facility for our own training sessions or using

Bright Ideas continued on p. 3



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

<http://www.stc.org>

Society President.....Andrea Ames
pres@stc.org

Region 3
Director-Sponsor..... Beth Tanner
ds3@stc.org

Mid-South Chapter

A sharing community creating opportunity

<http://www.stc-midsouth.org>

Officers

President..... Glenn Sanders
901.263.2554 glenn.sanders@fedex.com

Vice President Alison Joyner Masilak
901.274.0215 ajoyner@memphis.edu

Secretary Gail Spake
901.216.1611 gspake@earthlink.net

Treasurer Tracy Burgess
901.273.2740 tburgess@psychiatrist.com

Past President..... Mary Sue MacNealy
901.678.4431 macnealy@memphis.edu

Managers

Program..... Alison Joyner Masilak
901.274.0215 ajoyner@memphis.edu

Academic Liaison Loel Kim
901.678.3646 loelkim@memphis.edu

Education Jackie Walters
901.434.8137 jlwalters@fedex.com

Employment..... Paige Marshall
901.263.2557 paige.marshall@fedex.com

Historian.....David Armbruster
901.448.5051 darmbruster@utm.edu

Hospitality
and Membership.....Becky Brown Derych
901.273.2715 bbrown@psychiatrist.com

Publicity Diana Fedinec
901.678.2551 dfedinec@memphis.edu

Scholarship..... Susan Popham
901.678.2651 spopham@memphis.edu

Webmaster.....Rachelle Sanders
rlsndrs1@memphis.edu

Newsbrief

Newsbrief is the monthly newsletter of the Mid-South chapter of the Society for Technical Communication, a nonprofit organization. We create the newsletter to

- Involve members and visitors more fully in professional development and service.
- Foster a sense of community among chapter members and visitors.
- Provide a link between professors and students at local universities.
- Promote the benefits of chapter membership to attract new members.

Submissions

If you would like to contribute an article to *Newsbrief*, submit

- The text portion of the article as a text (TXT), rich text (RTF), or Microsoft Word (DOC) file.
- Photos as JPG or TIFF (for TIFF, file resolution \geq 150 dots per inch (dpi)).

Please send all submissions to the editor of *Newsbrief* by the 10th of the month to be considered for the next month's issue.

Copyright

Newsbrief invites writers to submit articles that they wish to be considered for publication. Please note, however, that by submitting an article, you implicitly grant a license to *Newsbrief* to run your article and for other STC publications to reprint it without permission. You as the writer nonetheless hold the copyright. When you submit an article, please let the editor know if this article has run elsewhere and if it has been submitted for consideration to other publications.

Reprints

Articles published by *Newsbrief* may be reprinted in other STC publications if credit is given to the author as well as the Mid-South chapter and a copy of the reprint is sent to the *Newsbrief* editor.

Subscription

To receive *Newsbrief* (for free) every month, give your email address to the editor.

Advertising

Newsbrief accepts advertisements relevant to technical communicators. Base prices are listed below, and discounts will be given for ads that run in at least two consecutive issues. For more information on how you can reach the more than 100 readers of *Newsbrief*, contact the editor.

Full page.....	\$60
Half page.....	\$40
Quarter page.....	\$20
Business card	\$10

Contact Information

Newsletter EditorApyrl Cox
901.273.2737 newsletter@stc-midsouth.org
954 Chatwood St., Memphis, TN 38122-5008

Bright Ideas continued from p. 2

their instructors for a full- or half-day workshop. New Horizons also offers some terrific software training bundles online, and we're looking into offering these packages to our members.

We have plans to add a members-only section to our chapter website. We're in the brainstorming phase with this idea, though the jobs and chapter voting sections will definitely be a part of the members-only section.

We're considering using a webcam to record and broadcast chapter meetings on the members-only section of the website so members who cannot make it to meetings can still reap the professional development benefits of our speakers.

At each of our monthly administrative council meetings, we set aside time to brainstorm ways to add value to your chapter memberships. The above ideas are the results of these sessions. While we think we have a pretty good start, we know that there are more "bright ideas" out there. If you have an idea for a way our chapter could add value to your membership, please send it to chapter president Glenn Sanders at glenn.sanders@fedex.com. ♦

STC Dues Renewal: How Much and How to Pay

It's once again time to renew your STC dues. Below is information to help you with the process. Dues payments must be received by the Society by February 28, 2005, for you to be eligible to vote in the 2005 election.

How Much to Pay

You can choose from one of four new individual membership categories. Classic and E-Membership levels allow you to join one chapter and one special interest group (SIG) or three SIGs, but E-Membership includes online only access to (no paper copies of) publications and is \$135 (versus \$145 for Classic). Limited membership includes online only access to publications; although it is only \$125, it does not include membership in any chapters or SIGs. Student membership, which is available to full-time students, costs \$50 and includes membership in one student chapter, one professional chapter, and unlimited SIGs as well as online only access to publications; however, it excludes Society voting rights.

If you joined the Society in February 2004 or later, your 2005 dues will cost less than the amounts above. Credits by month joined are as follows: February, \$14; March, \$28; April, \$42; May, \$56; June, \$70; July, \$84; August, \$98; September, \$112; October, \$126. Those who joined in November or December 2004 are considered paid in full for 2005.

How to Pay

STC accepts checks in U.S. dollars or Canadian equivalent, and American Express, MasterCard, and VISA payments. You may mail in the dues renewal form the Society sent you in November (if you hadn't renewed already) or pay online at <https://www.stc.org/onlinerenewal/stcLogin.aspx>. Online renewal is quick and convenient, and it reduces printing and postage costs, as well as environmental costs (for example, it decreases use of paper). ♦

November Meeting Notes: Contract Working

by Gail Spake, Mid-South Chapter Secretary

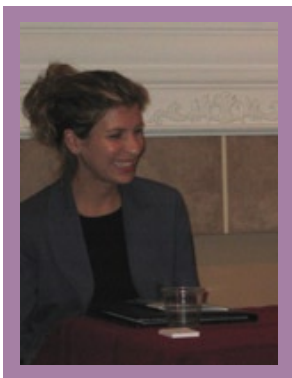
On Monday, November 1, 2004, 18 chapter members and 13 non-members gathered at the Cottage at the Four Seasons to learn more about contract working in Memphis. Our presenters were Stephanie Drouillard, Division Director for Robert Half Technology, and independent contractors Laurie Erlich and Melissa Faber.

Stephanie contrasted the employment of technical communicators who are on assignments through Robert Half and of independent contractors who are self employed. Those who contract through this consulting agency are assigned to 40-hour workweeks, and receive a salary over the term of employment. Those who are self employed may work more or less hours and receive payment only at the end of a project. Robert Half works as an agent for the communicator and deals with the employer on salary and employment responsibilities. Stephanie described this arrangement as a “safety net” and also mentioned other benefits, such as health insurance offerings, unlimited online computer training, and the advantage of having payroll deductions for tax. Stephanie provided salary guides as a handout.

Melissa discussed her experiences as a self-employed contract technical writer. She said there are many challenges for the self employed: fluctuations in income and being responsible for everything involved in your business enterprise, including billing, paying your own taxes and insurance premiums, and juggling many priorities. The work is often difficult and challenging. Nevertheless, it is empowering when you are in control of what you do and who you work with. She enjoys the flexibility she has to balance the demands of work with family needs.

Melissa mentioned that most of her communication with clients is handled electronically through emails and conference calls. Melissa advised that anyone who will be in business for themselves should be prepared to be his or her own information technology (IT) support professional, should have a portfolio of work, and should have a suite of stationary, including thank-you cards.

Melissa admitted that she maintains a relatively simple business system in Outlook and Excel that works very well for her. Her billing is based on knowledge of what her market will bear, and she factors in such issues as non-profits, who pay less than corporations but are often a pleasure to work with. She charges an hourly rate because projects tend to creep out of scope and it’s difficult to project adequate compensation for a project on the front end. Her recommendation for working with a client who wants a projection of the length of time and a ball-park price range for a project is to take the advance materials home and study it—and then project the costs in increments of 1/3 for a 3-phase project plan. She encourages taking your time to make such an assessment and to always make it clear to the client that changes will cost extra.



Stephanie Drouillard of the staffing company Robert Half Technical laughs as one of her fellow panelists relays a comical contracting experience.

Laurie has contracted since 1990. She works primarily with engineers because she began her professional career as an engineer before she became a contract technical communicator. Laurie decided early that her own commitment was the key to her success and set out to make it work. Laurie’s contract work is typically short term, time intensive, and deadline driven. She calls the time in between assignments “recovery time” and enjoys it. Laurie too must juggle priorities, but she emphasized the importance of treating every client “as if they are the only one.” Her focus is to help clients get to a point where they don’t need her; for example, she discovered that one client whom she helped develop a proposal for government funding had turned the document into a template and used it for numerous proposals. She is confident that when something comes up they can’t handle; then they will call again.

Laurie used to travel a great deal to meet with clients; now her work is typically via electronic communication. She did, however, recently travel to Malaysia, so there is some diversity in her work schedule. Laurie has done a lot of work with former employers and co-



Independent contractors Melissa Faber and Laurie Erlich listen as an audience member asks their advice.

Meeting Notes continued on p. 5

workers and cautioned against burning bridges when relationships end.

She discussed how as a sole proprietor, she must report income on a 1099 form and pay quarterly taxes and pay her own insurance, but she said that managing a business is not hard, just different. She recommended that before getting started, anyone interested in becoming self employed should consult a certified public accountant (CPA) for advice. Laurie uses a paper-based tracking system for client records and invoicing. She thinks about what the client will need to see and documents those items for billing purposes. Because her invoices mirror the timesheets of engineers, her clients are comfortable with the format and it's easy for her to manage. Laurie researched salary and billing strategies and noted that there are rationalized approaches to billing. However, her own billing is intuitive: she knows her market and what it will bear.

Laurie and Melissa recommended the STC Consulting and Independent Contracting special interest group (SIG) as a great resource for contractors (<http://www.stcsig.org/cic>). They both encouraged attendees not to undervalue their services and not to base their sense of their professional value on knowledge of software packages. Laurie said that clients and employers are looking for someone who can plan, organize, and guide more than for a software technician. Neither Melissa nor Laurie send out résumés, although they do maintain them to present if requested. Their reputations are built on testimonials of clients who have been pleased with their work. They do keep updated lists of clients they work for and awards they receive and are very careful about how that information is used because confidentiality is very important.

Stephanie, on the other hand, said that professionals whom Robert Half represents must have résumés, including a digital version that can be shared with clients. She recommends tailoring a cover letter for each prospective employer and sending thank-you letters to anyone you network with. Stephanie said that networking, based on referrals and who you know, is a way to get more work. And the way to get those referrals is to do great work. A résumé is for breaking in, but it's your work that sells. ♦

Don't Lose Touch With STC

Update your membership information with your home address, phone number, or email address. If you provide only your work contact information, the Society might lose track of you when you change jobs. To make an update, go to <http://www.stc.org/formAddressChange.asp> or call the office at 703.522.4114.

CALL FOR CLIPPINGS

Please cut out notices about an activity of the Mid-South chapter from local newspapers. Our publicity manager, Diana Fedinec collects copies of each notice for our entry in the STC chapter publicity competition.

One Step Closer to Independence: How to Develop a Fee Schedule

by Laura M. Vasquez, reprinted from *Independent Perspective*, Spring 2001

Two important parts of being or becoming a successful contractor or consultant are knowing what amount to charge for your services and how to achieve timely payment. The two methods commonly used to charge clients are hourly rates and fixed fees. Which of the two methods I use often depends on what my client or potential client prefers.

Hourly rates are the fees that you charge per hour for your services. If you are beginning a new type of project and are unsure how long it will take, it is a good idea to charge an hourly rate. New clients may be wary of this type of fee schedule because they do not know how much your part of the project will actually cost them. However, you might win their approval by stating in your proposal the maximum fee that you will charge for the project, e.g., "My fee for this project is \$45/hour, not to exceed \$6,500 if the project scope and schedule do not change significantly."

A fixed fee is a predetermined amount that you charge for a particular project, regardless of the number of hours that you contribute. A good rule of thumb, I have been told, is to calculate how long you think it will take you to complete the project, to multiply by your hourly rate, and to add 20% to the total.

Contracting Fee Schedule continued on p. 6

Factors to Consider When Setting Your Rate or Fee

- Number of hours that you estimate for the project, including meetings with the client and actually working on the project
- Project requirements, e.g., if the project requires specialized skills or knowledge, then you can charge a higher amount
- Urgency of requirement, e.g., 24-hour turnaround or last-minute notification to begin a contract—requiring you to put the rest of your life on hold—means a higher rate or fee
- The “going rate” for your geographic area, taking into account your education, skills, and experience
- Overhead costs, including equipment maintenance, office-rental fee, interview with the potential client, preparing your project proposal, following up, and childcare arrangements (if applicable)

Cautions

- Do not bill directly for overhead costs, or you may lose not just this contract but also future opportunities with the client.
- Be sure not to give too many details in your project proposal because the company could take and use your ideas without paying you anything! If you plan to include extensive notes in your proposal, then be sure to have a contract in place verifying that you will be paid for your outline regardless of what the potential client does with the information.

How to Collect Payment

Payment for contracting is a wonderful thing, but you should follow several steps in order to be sure that you receive it:

1. Determine in what form you wish payment: check, credit card, or bank wire transfer (for international clients). Keep in mind that if you plan to ask for a check, then you should open a business checking account, if you have not already done so. In this way you will avoid any problems of trying to deposit into your personal account a check made out to your business name. For example, it cost me nearly \$9 (plus time and frustration) to make and fax photocopies of my fictitious business name statement, invoices, check, and driver’s license to my bank so that it would authorize the local service center to accept a business check into our joint account. The new client had made the check out to my business name rather than to me, despite my invoice specifications.
2. Specify in the contract when and how you expect payment.
If you want to be paid within fifteen days after you submit an invoice, then specify that the payment is due “Net 15.” It is more likely, however, that a company for which you are contracting will specify “Net 30.” Unfortunately, “Net 30” does not necessarily mean that you will be paid within 30 days. For example, I discovered after my first invoice was due—that company policy was to pay Net 30 even though the signed contract specified Net 15. Despite several telephone queries and reassurances, I did not receive my check in the mail. I finally went personally to pick it up about Net 45. (This was also the company that wrote the check to my business name although I had specified to make it out to my personal name. Fortunately, as we have worked over the past few years, payment has become more timely and checks are properly addressed.)
3. Submit an invoice as outlined in your contract.
For a fixed-fee project, a good rule of thumb is to send an invoice at the completion of certain milestones, such as delivery of the outline, first draft, final draft. Divide the total amount of the contract by the number of milestones to determine how much to bill on each invoice. If you are working on an hourly basis, then the client may require a weekly invoice that lists your total hours—perhaps by project number if you were, for example, editing several client documents—and your fee for that time period.
4. Follow up as necessary.
Before you send “Past-Due” notices, call your contact at the company to see if that person can assist you with the payment. It may take several calls—preferably not all in the same day! Keep in mind that a new client may take a while longer to pay your invoices at first because it must process a variety of paperwork and go through various depart-

Contracting Fee Schedule continued on p. 7

ments before cutting your check. Make sure that all necessary legal paperwork has been completed early in the project cycle, preferably before you begin work! Use your instincts. If you do not believe that you will be paid, despite the verbal verification, then begin submitting weekly or biweekly Past-Due notices. If you still do not receive payment, then you will need to pursue payment through a collection agency or the courts. For a small claims case in California, the amount of your claim must be less than \$5,000, and you cannot file more than two cases in small claims court for more than \$2,500 each during a calendar year. From experience, I know that it is preferable to resolve the problem without having to go to court to collect your payment. If you ever have to go to court, however, be sure that you have witnesses and a paper trail to document everything related to your project and case, especially if you worked under a verbal agreement rather than a written contract, which I would not recommend.

Evaluate Each Project and Phase

Document how long each phase of each project takes you so that you know how much you are earning. Determine which areas are most (and least) profitable. For example, you may find that interviews and proposal development have taken so many hours that your actual per-hour earnings are significantly less than planned. Your next fixed-fee proposal or your hourly rate should take this factor into account so that you earn the appropriate, or necessary, amount. Methods of setting fees and collecting payment will vary by contractor or independent consultant, geographic region, and project requirements. There is no single method that will work best for everyone in every situation. With time, good documentation, and experience, however, you will learn how much the different types of projects—and the different project phases—actually cost you in terms of both time and money. Adjust your rates accordingly.

Notes: This article is based on consulting and contracting experience in California, particularly in Orange County. Please consult local officials for guidelines, fees, and requirements in your own city, county, and state.

Laura is a Senior Member of the Orange County Chapter. She has freelanced since 1993 and officially started her company, Vasquez Communications Consulting, in 1998.

The *Independent Perspective* is the newsletter of STC's Consulting and Independent Contracting Special Interest Group (CIC SIG). For more information, visit their website at <http://www.stcsig.org/cic/index.html>. ♦

Need a Job? Know of One?

View local listings at <http://www.stc-midsouth.org/jobs.html>. Share notices with Paige Marshall at paige_marshall@fedex.com.

Letters

To the Editor:

A company called The Editorium programs and distributes Microsoft Word macros and other Word resources specifically for writers, editors, and others in the publishing industry. As a way of publicizing these tools, it also distributes a free online service with tips and tricks for using Word as a publishing tool. Their website even features a link to previous issues and a page of additional resources for editors. I don't want to try to dissuade chapter members from writing articles about Word for *Newsbrief* (see "Word Tips" in the [October 2004 issue](#)). However, readers might benefit from being told about The Editorium and finding out how to subscribe to the service. You can find out more at the company's website: <http://www.editorium.com>.

Margaret Carbaugh

Editor's Note: Thanks to Margaret for her helpful feedback on the "Word Tips" column. Because, as she points out, a similar resource is readily available on the web, "Word Tips" will not be a regular column in *Newsbrief*. However, any articles on software or other technical communication tips—whether in the form of an article or a letter—are welcome submissions to *Newsbrief*. If you know of a useful resource that you would like to share with other readers, send it to newsletter@stc-midsouth.org. ♦

Upcoming Chapter Meetings

Please plan to attend the following upcoming events of the Mid-South chapter.

Monday, January 3, 5:30–7:30

Topic: Content Management Systems

Speakers: Tom Kirstein, Jeffrey Milton, and Paul Ringger

Format: Panel presentation

Location: Cottage at the Four Seasons, 4930 Park Ave. The Four Seasons is next door to the Buntyn Cafe and across Park Ave. from Marquette Park. A free parking lot and the entrance are in back.

Cost: \$5 for student members, \$10 for non-student members, \$10 for student non-members, \$15 for non-student non-members

Special information: This meeting will be jointly held by the Mid-South chapter and the Toad, a local non-profit organization for technology professionals, users, and enthusiasts

Wednesday, January 12, 11:30–1:30

Topic: Preemptive Project Planning

Speaker: John Hedtke

Format: Luncheon and web-telephone seminar

Location: Homewood Suites, 3583 Hacks Cross Rd., which is located off Bill Morris Pkwy. Free parking is available.

Cost: \$22 for members, \$27 for nonmembers

Monday, February 2, 5:30–7:30

Topic: How New Technologies Affect Technical Communication as a Discipline

Speakers: Mike Albers

Format: Presentation, preview of research in an upcoming theme issue of the journal *Technical Communication*

Location: Cottage at the Four Seasons, 4930 Park Ave. The Four Seasons is next door to the Buntyn Cafe and across Park Ave. from Marquette Park. A free parking lot and the entrance are in back.

Cost: \$5 for student members of STC, \$10 for non-student members, \$10 for student non-members, \$15 for non-student non-members

If you would like additional details, visit <http://www.stc-midsouth.org>. If you have ideas for future meeting topics and speakers, contact Alison Masilak (ajoyner@memphis.edu or 901.274.0215). ♦

Other Meetings of Interest to Technical Communicators

The Mid-South chapter has received notices about the following events.

January 4, 2005

At 6:00 p.m., the Memphis chapter of Project Management International will present “Managing Multiple Projects and Project Management Inventory/Cataloging Application Demo.” The course will be held at Christian Brothers University, 650 East Parkway South. For more information, go to <http://www.pmimemphis.org>.

February 20, 2005

The Memphis Macromedia Users Group will hold its monthly meeting from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at the University of Phoenix building in Cordova, 65 Germantown Court, Suite 305. For more information, go to <http://mmug.mind-over-data.com/index.cfm>.

February 25–26, 2005

Currents 2005, the STC Atlanta chapter’s annual conference, will be held at the Atlanta campus of Mercer University. Registration is ongoing. For more information, contact conference manager Rachel Grimes at rhgrimes@checkfree.com or Leigh Richardson at lrichardson@intellisync.com or 678.802.1226. Complete conference information is posted at <http://www.stcatlanta.org>.

May 8–11, 2005

The 52nd annual conference of STC, Experiencing Technical Communication, will be held in Seattle, Washington. For more information, go to <http://www.stc.org/conference.asp>.

Please submit any announcements of meetings interest to technical communicators in the Mid-South to newsletter@stc-midsouth.org. ♦