

Greetings from the STC Board Newbies

— *Let Us Hear From You*

By Mark Clifford, Char James-Tanny, Mike Murray, and Jeff Staples, members of the STC Board of Directors

With this year's STC elections, the four of us now have the opportunity to represent you on STC's International Board of Directors. This is an exciting time for STC with a host of initiatives being formulated to keep the Society moving forward and to enhance an open dialog between all members of the Society.

This article provides a brief introduction for each of us, including our duties on the Board and a bit of personnel insight. Photos are included so you will recognize us at STC events.

Mark Clifford, STC Second Vice President



Hello one and all.

After ten years on the administrative council of the UK chapter, and last year as an assistant to the STC President (Suzanna Laurent), I have to admit to some trepidation when running for second vice president! Yes, you can change the world – but STC? Well, the next three years will be interesting!

Work Activities

Since completing my engineering publications apprenticeship with British Aircraft Corp. (BAC) in the mid-70s, I have worked as editor, writer, manager, and recruiter, primarily with publications consultancies and service companies. I have lived and worked across Europe, working with Dutch, Belgian, French, and Swedish companies, holding board-level positions with three of them. Somewhere in there, I graduated from the University of Luton's Business Program.

I currently run my own information design and recruitment company, which provides consultancy, resource, and ID solutions for European clients from offices in the UK and France.

STC Duties

As this year's Second Vice President, my responsibility is leading the Marketing area initiatives.

Marketing STC and our members to the world is one of our key strategic goals. STC is poised to put technical communication, both for its practices and its practitioners, firmly back on the business agenda. The new STC strategic plan is designed to market our profession by communicating directly to those that use or buy our services. At the same time, it addresses the individual need for continuing professional growth.

I have committees working on developing interests with a variety of other organisations, gaining society-level sponsors, and publicising our achievements. All of these have a huge impact on getting our message out.

Personal Bits

When I'm not involved at work or with STC, I like to escape by going bird watching – especially in coastal areas and wetlands. It's a very relaxing and fascinating hobby. I'm not a 'twitcher' so you won't find me dropping everything and rushing off to find a rare bird!

In quieter moments, I'm an armchair historian. I read military histories and biographies. My passion is the Napoleonic period in Europe, in particular Wellington's campaigns in Portugal and Spain.

I have three grown children and a six year-old granddaughter who has me wrapped completely round her little finger.

Cheers!

Contact Mark at 2vp@stc.org or mark@cliffordsells.com.

Char James-Tanny, STC Secretary



Hi. :-)

I'm Char James-Tanny, the new Secretary for the STC, and I'm really excited about the things the board has planned for the upcoming year.

At last year's conference, I decided that I would invest two years in making STC a premier organization—one that every technical communicator would want to belong to. With my election, that's been extended a bit, as the Secretary has a two-year term. (This just gives me more time!)

Work Tasks

I'm basically the geek on the board. :-) I want technology to make my life easier, and I plan on bringing it to the board to make their lives easier.

Last year's board did some amazing groundwork for us by creating the Interim Strategic Plan and new organizational chart (both available at www.stc.org). We get to take it to the next step by implementing those pieces.

STC Duties

My job as Secretary is to record the minutes, notes, action items from all meetings, and support all committees. I have big shoes to fill: Lori Fisher did an awesome job during her term, and she also paved the way for some of the changes I want to make.

One of the things that I'm going to implement is a Web-based Communication System (or, as I fondly refer to it, the WCS). WCS will initially be available for board and committee members, but I hope to eventually open it to the membership. (It will probably take us a couple of months to get it installed and set up correctly.)

I'm one of the proponents of certification, at least until we get more information. I think that certification could be a valuable benefit for members, and I'm in favor of anything that brings value.

Personal Bits

Because I run my company out of my home, I tend to keep fairly weird work hours. I'm online as soon as I wake up, and I tend to work nights after my son has gone to bed. I am typically not available most weekdays from 3:30 pm until 8 pm, because my son, Jesse, has a life. ;-)

He is a member of the North Shore Swim Club, and he's been swimming competitively for two years. He also plays soccer and belongs to two teams: one travel and one intramural (that I coach). He's my joy in life, even as our house fills with pets of all kinds, including dogs, a cat, parakeets, a cockatoo, a parrot, and a fish tank. Because my husband works nights (in addition to running the other half of our company), Jesse and I spend a lot of time together, and I wouldn't miss it for the world.

I love to cook and bake. My favorite gifts are kitchen tools and gadgets. I use my time when flying to catch up on TV shows that I haven't had a chance to watch (we have Tivo, so I pull them onto my laptop) and read.

You can reach me at stc@helpstuff.com.

Mike Murray, STC Director



An enthusiastic “Hi” to all of my STC teammates around the world. Several folks asked me to run for Director, and I am extremely glad that I did. My best friends are in STC. I *love* this organization.

Work Activities

In my 28th year with Lockheed Martin, my current role is as the principal writer in the corporation’s Enterprise Information Systems (EIS) organization, the only virtual organization in the company. I specifically support the marketing activities for these products and services. Many years of virtual communications experience add another important qualification to my STC resume.

My years at Lockheed Martin follow 10-1/2 years in the U.S. Air Force, which also exposed me to international cultures.

STC Duties

I am a strong “people person,” and I was pleased when STC President Paula Berger assigned me to the Communities area along with fellow directors Sherry Michaels and Beau Cain. The Communities committee includes the Leadership Community Resource (LCR), Virtual Communities, and Community Recognition.

In addition, Paula asked me to be the Board of Directors representative on a task force that will develop a new community business model. The task force will consist of 10-12 leaders from communities of various sizes and types around the world AND our new Executive Director Susan Burton, an amazing lady!

I do a lot of mentoring, both individuals and groups, and am especially good at examining an organization and zeroing in on what its leaders need to do to strengthen it.

Personal Bits

Outside of work and STC, I love sports announcing. I regularly announce for various organizations, including Dr. Phillips High School (football and basketball) and Rollins College (volleyball and basketball). I am especially proud of my support of Dr. Phillips High School, where I have announced for the entire 20 years of its existence. The school inducted me into its Hall of Fame in 2001. I am also the part-time stadium announcer for the Osceola Outlaws, a professional team in the National Indoor Football League.

For several years in a row, I have received the national President’s Volunteer Service Award, which goes to individuals who demonstrate a sustained commitment to volunteer service each year. My service in Central Florida has involved restructuring and strengthening youth organizations such as Pop Warner Football, Little League Baseball, and Cub Scouts.

I have been married for 38 *wonderful* years to my best friend Kay. We live in Orlando with our delightful dog Butterscotch, a Schnauzer-Poodle mix. She cuddles, hugs, kisses, loves to play and have her belly rubbed, and *loves* to swim in our pool. Wait, maybe that’s Kay I just described. No, it’s definitely Butterscotch. ☺ We have two adult sons and five wonderful grandchildren.

I love people and would love to hear from you at dirmm@stc.org.

Jeff Staples, STC Director



Hello, Members. After much deliberation (and extreme indecisiveness), I submitted my “packet” for nomination for Director. Needless, to say I was surprised to win the election, and wondered if it was the right decision/result. However, once I began reading/hearing all the activity with the STC leadership, I became excited and was happy to learn that everything wasn’t just “status quo.” Everything is basically wide open, and it’s an opportunity for the members and the STC leadership/management to continue and enhance this organization as the premier leader in technical communication.

Work Activities

In my career life, I am generally a “commodity” writer, often focusing on formatting and making the document “look pretty.” But that’s okay, because this type of writer is still in demand. And in whatever we do, being professional and good at our work brings recognition to our profession. And, in with the basic writing tasks do come some exciting tasks, such as working on a safety survey and then formulating the mechanics to get it live on the web.

STC Duties

I am one of the first two directors to be elected from the entire STC membership. This kind of created a gray area in what my responsibilities as Director would be. However, STC President Paula Berger took care of that. <grin>

The new STC org structure assigns each Director to a strategic area. I consider myself fortunate to have landed in the Communications area along with Director Cindy Currie. This area holds great potential in all areas of STC communication but especially in the areas of Member Communication and the STC website and publications.

Personal Bits

In December ’05, I began what has become a regular yoga practice. I originally began practicing for back problems and overall mental health, and it has helped in those areas. However, I have come to learn that yoga helps basically all parts of the body. For example, when you perform a twist, toxins are squeezed out of your internal organs (similar to squeezing water out of a sponge). Then, when you release out of the twist, the organs are ready to absorb fresh blood.

In addition, I enjoy independent and foreign films and books out of the normal fare, such as those by Ayn Rand and Philip Roth.

Drop me a line at dirjs@stc.org.

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