

# Devil Mountain Views

Newsletter of the East Bay Chapter of STC  
September/October 2003

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## **Notes on the 2003 Annual STC Conference**

EBSTC President, **Susan Harlan**, provides a summary of the sessions she attended at the conference and identifies trends in our profession.

## **How Literacy Outreach Spent Summer Vacation**

What did you do on your summer vacation? **T.R. Grill** didn't have a vacation, as he was busy with student field trips and updating the Literacy Project web site!

## **STC as a Volunteer Organization**

Different generations view volunteerism in very distinct ways. **Susan Harlan** discusses these differences and how they relate to STC.

## **Short Story: Lethal Pen**

**Adrienne Tange** entertains us with a chilling tale of a phantom editor.

## **Ask Elaine: Reining in Apostrophilia**

DMV Copyeditor, **Elaine Parrish**, kicks off her new column with insight into the ubiquitous apostrophe.



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## Editor's Message

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by [Becky Rude](#)  
 President-Elect

### Hello Readers!

Welcome back to *Devil Mountain Views* after the summer break. This summer we worked hard to recruit a new managing editor and to put this issue together. Because I'm writing the editor's column, you can guess that we've not yet found an editor. But, we do have a great issue for you with updates on the annual STC conference, meeting reports from June and July, a Literacy Project report, a book review of *Don't Make Me Think*, a spooky short story, and a new column on editing issues!

### Become the Managing Editor

Unless you've been off Planet Earth for the past couple of months, you know that the big news in California is the governor's recall election. Yes, California is maintaining its image as the goofy state. 135 people paid \$3500 apiece to get their names on the ballot so they can tell their children how they once ran for governor. You may have missed your chance to be written about in history books as a gubernatorial candidate, but you can still add your name to history as the managing editor of the award-winning *Devil Mountain Views*!



### Here are the top 10 reasons why you should be the managing editor:

10.	You can tell your friends to search on your name in Google.
9.	You'll learn project management and people management skills.
8.	You'll travel to exotic locations and do crazy things (wait, that's the EBSTC president position).
7.	You'll meet and work with wonderful EBSTC members.
6.	Your can brag in your holiday letter that you're a Managing Editor with a staff and point your friends and family to a cool web page with your picture.
5.	You'll work with a great staff of editors and designers who make your job easy.
4.	You get to throw the first pitch at the Giants' home opener of the divisional playoffs (OK, I'm making this one up).

3.	You won't have to take pictures like former editors because we now have a chapter photographer (thanks, Sue Phelan!).
2.	You'll wow managers when your resume says "Managing Editor of Devil Mountain Views, which won the Award of [Merit, Excellence, Best of Show] during my tenure."
1.	It's guaranteed that Arnold Schwarzenegger won't step in to take the spotlight.

So now that you have 10 reasons, how can you resist? On a serious note, being involved with the newsletter has been a very rewarding and beneficial experience. And, managers are truly impressed when you tell them about your role with the newsletter. If you're interested in talking about this honor, please [email me](#).

Enjoy the newsletter!

Becky ▲

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## President's Message: EBSTC Vision Statement for 2003– 2004



by [Susan Harlan](#)  
 EBSTC President

From the STC staff in Washington, D.C., to our working, unemployed, or underemployed members, we have all seen great changes in the past year. The economy might be showing signs of improvement, but globalization and the transfer from an industrial age to an information age are still in process.

While some writers with highly technical backgrounds and those with special niches continue working as usual, most technical writers now need to redefine and reposition themselves as technical communicators, or business communicators who are also adept at self-marketing.

### High-Tech, High-Touch

In this changing high-tech environment, EBSTC can be a high-touch chapter: one that focuses on members at the personal level and not just business.

- We can network and also share work and life stories to mentor those around us.
- We can reach out to new members, and not just sign them up but welcome them and show them we are happy they joined STC and the East Bay Chapter.
- We can encourage them to volunteer and become a vital part of the organization.

We need to take a fresh look at volunteerism itself. One of the speakers at the STC Annual Conference in Dallas described the changes in volunteerism and the expectations of different types of volunteers as defined by their age group (see my [conference story](#) in this issue for more information). For example, a volunteer today might be more inspired to be an *amateur* trying out some new task—like Benjamin Franklin, a scientific amateur who made major scientific discoveries.

### Moving to New Levels

With these changes and new directions, we will not be discarding all of the practices and procedures developed by the East Bay Chapter over the years. This year, for the first time, our chapter won STC's Merit Award, a notable chapter achievement. Building on this during the coming year, we will work to reach a higher plateau that will include meeting the Merit Award requirements and then going after the Chapter of Excellence Award.

The clearly defined requirements for these awards provide a baseline of activities that we can develop and implement. As volunteers, we will

complete the tasks following business procedures in a high-tech, high-touch environment.

Add the networking that takes place naturally in STC-related activities, and we can look forward to a year of professional development that expands our contacts and our vision. Your volunteer time will be appreciated! ▲

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## Chapter Meeting Information

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### Upcoming Meetings

Attending meetings is a great way to learn new things and connect with technical writers around the East Bay. East Bay programs are usually held at Crow Canyon Country Club in San Ramon. For details on meeting location and reservations, see the [meetings page](#) on the chapter web site.

Date	Speaker	Topic
September 4	<b>Ron Person</b>	<p><i>Creating High Performance Teams</i></p> <p><b>Win an Amazon book gift certificate!</b></p> <p>This presentation will leave you with a foundation of skills, tools, and discussion topics you can use to help your next team reach high performance. Bring your inquisitive mind and lengthy experience because you're not going to just sit and listen. We're going to spend time mining our audience's experience for stories, tips, and techniques on creating high performance teams. The best tip wins the Amazon gift certificate!</p>



### June door prize winners

In June, we had a summer party theme for the prizes. Pictured from left to right are:

**Julia London** (DMV's new Associate Editor) won a Frisbee

**Earl Jones** won a s'mores kit (marshmallows, Hershey bars, and graham crackers, for those not in the Scouts)

**Nan Breedlove** (EBSTC Secretary) won the lovely hat she's wearing

**Patricia Smith** won a squirt gun

**Richard Moss** won a patio candle

**Pat Kasavan** won a bottle of Jack Daniels Grilling Sauce

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## Meeting Report: June 2003

by [Nan Breedlove](#)  
 EBSTC Secretary

### Process—The Most Important Product

New!  
 See [June Meeting Photos!](#)



Denise Asplund, Director of Technical Publications Resources at [Siebel Systems](#), Inc. in Emeryville, wrapped up the chapter's spring programs in June with a presentation to give us all hope—yes, it is possible to keep the revolving door of documentation from spinning out of control.

A leading provider of customer relationship management software that helps businesses track customers and their needs, Siebel has a "bookshelf" of more than 175 titles for 300 products. HTML and PDF are the methods of delivery, with a push to move more titles to HTML.

At present, the Technical Publications Department has about 50 people on staff; half are dedicated writers while the other half provide editing, graphics, QA, and production support.

### Staying Ahead of the Game

The Siebel Technical Publications Department has solved the perennial problem of documentation updates and drifting engineering deadlines by generating monthly releases.

- The product managers and engineers meet weekly to prioritize the books that require updating.
- The publications staff updates those documents and makes a release on the fourth Friday of each month.

The strategy ensures that the most important documentation changes get out to customers in a timely way, while sparing the documentation staff the burden of endless hours of overtime at the end of engineering releases. In short, the monthly release strategy keeps customers happy and boosts employee morale.

Asplund noted that the department is unique in that the staff is centralized rather than split out to engineering, support, and marketing groups, and responds to customer needs as defined by product managers.

As might be expected, the Siebel Technical Publications Department has processes for everything. For example, the style guide is continually updated by a well-documented process, and changes are published at weekly meetings and through email.

### Looking Forward

Siebel is focused on the future. The Technical Publications Department has three persons dedicated to R&D who continually assess department processes.

Asplund anticipates that the department will embrace a content

management system approach to documentation, put greater emphasis on modular writing, and move to XML. As with so many other companies, Siebel is considering outsourcing its QA work to India.

Asplund says it's a great privilege to work with the group at Siebel. Despite layoffs over the past two years, Siebel is poised to hire again. She cautions that hiring takes a long time and involves a long process of interviews.

According to her, the Siebel writer is technically competent, independent, creative, flexible, and able to maintain focus in a dynamic environment. And, one might add, dedicated to observing process. ▲

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## Meeting Report: June 2003

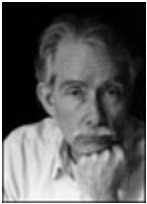
At the EBSTC June 2003 meeting, Melody Brumis was honored, many chapter volunteers were recognized, much food was eaten, and we enjoyed ourselves thoroughly!

**Enjoy the pictures!**



Susan Harlan, President 2003–2004  
 Melody Brumis, President 2002–2003 ▲

### A Bouquet Of Limericks For Melody



by [Bill Ardis](#)  
 EBSTC Member

Of Melody it can be said  
 She doesn't let things come to a head  
 Without thinking them through  
 For me and for you  
 And then putting the issues to bed

She's given herself to STC  
 For the past year or more, don't you see  
 Now she's retiring  
 And we're so admiring  
 Of the many tasks she's freed

So that we could laugh and play  
 And write and ponder the day  
 As she uses a blender  
 Preparing an agender  
 For the meeting to come on a Thursday

So these rhymes do not always come clean  
 If they do not, don't be mean  
 When the poem won't scan  
 It's the words that resist, man!



Melody Brumis and Jane Schaefer, Archivist ▲



Melody Brumis and Aswini Tharwal, Newsletter Managing Editor  
 2002 - 2003 ▲

But the feeling for Mizz Brumis can be seen

So don't shoot the poet, on no  
As he lacked time to grow it, so slow  
All nifty and nice  
Rhyming cutely and twice  
Ending the line with a perfect Oh-ho!

Since the poem's not about Bill  
Let us not, about him, speak ill  
As he's working tonight  
Till they put out the light  
And the bankers, they close the till

But wait, a word more about Melody!  
I wish I were there to say hello-dee  
But since I cannot  
I sat here to jot  
This verse to a woman quite nif-tee

Thanks for your service, dear heart  
You are quite wonderful and smart  
I now must adjourn  
Go sit by a fern  
And ponder this writerly art

Which is what brought us together  
Our keyboards at Chevron a'clatter  
We were rockin' and reelin'  
In service to Sue Phelan  
Stirring words that would certainly matter

But let us now end this long clause  
Before the audience leaves on their paws  
And so, dear Melody  
Though nothing rhymes except fellow-dee  
Please accept our hugs and applause.



Melody Brumis and Janet Bran, Web Weaver 2002 - 2003 ▲



Melody Brumis and Peggy Shepard, V.P. Programs 2002-2003,  
2003-2004 ▲



Melody Brumis and Marsha Workman, Membership Manager  
2002-2003 ▲



Our Award Winning Newsletter Volunteers - Ashwini Tharwal and Becky Rude ▲

Melody Brumis and Judy Herr ▲



Susan Harlan, President 2003–2004  
Melody Brumis, President 2002–2003 ▲

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## Meeting Report: July 2003

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by [Nan Breedlove](#)  
EBSTC Secretary

### Designing for People! Human Factors for Technical Communicators



While taxing memory and challenging problem-solving skills, **Andrea Ames** impressed those attending the July 10 EBSTC meeting with the necessity to consider how users really solve problems in her presentation "Designing for People! Human Factors for Technical Communicators."

Ames, an Associate Fellow and First Vice President of STC, is a Senior Information Developer for [IBM](#) and Certificate Coordinator and Instructor at UC Extension (Santa Cruz).

She engaged listeners immediately by reciting a random list of words with mnemonic phrases and saying that later in the presentation she would ask them to recall the words.

Ames focused on two aspects of cognitive psychology that affect the ability to read, understand, and apply information:

- Memory
- Problem-solving technique

### Headhunting in Borneo

Despite the technical communicator's skill and best intentions, user perception based on experience or expectations can derail meaning from the outset before memory or problem-solving skills enter the picture.

Ames illustrated the point with the tale of the adventurer who hired a professional guide for a trek through the jungles of Borneo, an area notorious for headhunters. Encountering a spear-carrying native with his dog bearing down on them, the guide suddenly ran behind the adventurer and cowered, and the adventurer was terrified that he was about to lose his head. When the hunter and his dog passed by without incident, the adventurer berated the guide for not protecting him against the fierce hunter. The guide replied that the hunter was no threat, but that he feared that the dog would rip him to shreds.

Based on their experience with products and documentation, users have certain expectations that technical communicators may ignore at the peril of losing their readers. Usability testing provides an excellent opportunity to observe how experience and expectation affect the ability to absorb data and use it to complete a task.

### Making Order Out of Chaos

Ames's word list exercises dramatically demonstrated how the mind works to recall information. Listeners most readily remembered lists in which

random words fell into associative groups. Likewise people had success remembering words when Ames provided the mnemonics. Success was most limited with a random list of words having no apparent associations. However, members of the audience reported trying to make some sort of order out of the random list to help them remember the words.

That exercise demonstrated that technical communicators must:

- Organize and categorize information for users
- Make navigation and next actions evident
- Provide a paradigm model for users to hang their hat on
- Be rigorously consistent with terminology
- Provide all necessary information or users will invent it

## Can't Get No Satisficing

Many communicators believe that to solve problems, people generally use the classic strategy of conceptualizing, reasoning, selecting a strategy, and avoiding obstacles. But the reality is that they resort to what has worked in the past to come up with a solution that "satisfices." That is, they use the first solution that occurs to them; it may not be elegant, but it satisfies because it suffices to get the job done.

There's at least one engineer in every company who has a t-shirt that says, "Real men don't read the manual." Ames encourages writers to use techniques that enable the user to skim and scan rather than read—because that's how real people with real problems in real time look for answers.

If you feel like solving one of the problems presented, consider this: How many cubic feet of dirt can be removed from a hole 25 feet long by 10 feet wide by 5 feet deep? [Answer](#)

## Resources

- [Slides](#) from Andrea's presentation.
- Krug, Steve. [Don't Make Me Think](#). Editor's note: See the [review](#) of this book in this issue.
- Coe, Marlana. [Human Factors for Technical Communicators](#)
- Norman, Donald. [The Psychology of Everyday Things](#) ▲

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## Chapter Activities: Congratulations to New Members

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Let's welcome our new, transfer, and reinstated members!

- Michael Aquino
- Melanie Dell'Oca
- Ted Fleischman
- Shahana Mitra
- Kathleen Otis
- Christine Parks
- Elaine Parrish
- Swati Pathak
- Robert Peterson
- David Watson
- Thomas Williams

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## Member Spotlight: Elaine Parrish

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by [Becky Rude](#)  
 EBSTC President-Elect

*Elaine Parrish has been editing the Devil Mountain Views since 1998 when she first joined STC. She won the EBSTC Volunteer of the Year award in May 2003 for her dedication to the newsletter and her efforts to make it an award-winning publication. DMV has won four awards since Elaine has been copyeditor. This is her story!*



**Elaine Parrish** (center) with **Ashwini Tharval** (left) and **Becky Rude** (right) accepting her Member of the Year Award

### Job

Elaine works as an Editorial Consultant for SBC where she has been employed for 24 years. She has several areas of responsibility: editing internal training materials for both web-based and paper-based training, maintaining standards and styles, and maintaining Information Mapping templates. Additionally, Elaine serves as the unofficial Word guru.

### Years Involved with STC

Elaine is active in an international online discussion group called CE-L (copyediting list). She wanted to get involved with some type of professional organization, and several members of the list recommended that she check into STC. Elaine joined STC in 1998 and immediately started volunteer work copyediting the newsletter.

### How STC Has Benefited Me

The magazines and other publications are very useful to Elaine. She states that she is always learning something new to help her professionally. She believes that STC is a great organization to belong to. For the past six years Elaine has lived in Modesto and commuted to San Ramon, which leaves little time for STC meetings. However, she and her husband will soon be moving to Livermore and Elaine is looking forward to attending chapter meetings.

### How I Became an Editor

Editing was a natural fit for Elaine as she was an English major in college and when she found out about the field, she realized that it fit her personality. Elaine started out as a typist for SBC and her boss was an editor. Her boss mentored her and taught her the ins and outs of editing.

### **I Love My Job**

Now this is something you don't hear often—Elaine absolutely loves her job! She thinks her boss and her co-workers are wonderful and truly function as a team. The core group has been together about five years with the same leader. Their clients are also great people to work with and Elaine loves editing for them.

### **Top Work Challenge**

As the office Word guru, people think that Elaine knows every single Word feature. However, as Elaine explains, Word is so complex with so many obscure features, that no single person can know everything about it. She can often solve her co-workers' issues, but occasionally she cannot, which leaves her feeling frustrated. [Writer's note: I asked if she'd heard about the [Microsoft Knowledge Base](#), which she hadn't, but was excited to use for some problems she couldn't resolve. STC's networking is a wonderful thing!]

### **When I Grew Up I Wanted to Be**

An actress or an artist. Elaine finds this very amusing because as a child she dreamed of entering two creative fields, but now finds herself in an extremely analytical career.

### **I Enjoy Reading**

Elaine is an avid reader. "Given a choice between TV and reading, I'll always choose reading." She reads many different types of books, but especially enjoys fiction, biographies, and autobiographies. On her must-read list is [Liverpool Fantasy](#) and the autobiography of Queen Noor of Jordan, [Leap of Faith](#).

### **Best Vacation**

Once a year for their anniversary, Elaine and her husband, Joe, head to Monterey. They get all dressed up and spend the evening at the elegant [Sardine Factory](#) restaurant. Elaine describes this event as a real treat where they go all out and pretend there are no financial constraints! She loves the abalone, which she says is very expensive (it is—I looked at the menu, \$59.95).

### **Free to Good Home**

Elaine's daughter's adopted stray cat, Avery, just had four adorable kittens. If you're looking for a companion, contact [Elaine](#). ▲

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## Networking

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### Northern California STC Chapters



There are six active Northern California STC chapters. Each chapter meets on a different Wednesday or Thursday so you can attend all the meetings. Contact the respective presidents for more information or visit the chapter web site.

Wednesdays	Chapter	President
Week 1	<a href="#">Sacramento</a>	<a href="#">Jeff Simon</a>
Week 2	<a href="#">Berkeley</a>	<a href="#">Joe Devney</a>
Week 3	<a href="#">San Francisco</a>	<a href="#">Susan Becker</a>
Thursdays	Chapter	President
Week 1	<a href="#">East Bay</a>	<a href="#">Susan Harlan</a>
Week 3	<a href="#">North Bay</a>	<a href="#">Rolfe Dlugy-Hegwer</a>
Week 4	<a href="#">Silicon Valley</a>	<a href="#">Fred Sampson</a>

### Need a Little Pat on the Back?

Join the Networking SIG!

Need a little encouragement during your job search? The East Bay Chapter's Networking SIG is revving up again. But we're not a support group; we're a job-hunt SUCCESS group. Until we begin our weekly meetings again, join us at our Yahoo Groups home: Subscribe at [EBSTC\\_Networking\\_SIG-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:EBSTC_Networking_SIG-subscribe@yahoo.com).

### Bumming Around: The Benefits of Party Crashing

by [Marsha Howard](#)  
 EBSTC Networking SIG Manager

The bad news: I have a little more time on my hands these days due, in part, to the high tech slump. The good news: I try to fill it wisely. On Wednesday, August 20, I put my time to good use by crashing the Silicon Valley Usability SIG's meeting. And, in so doing, I learned about a very unusual career option.

Notice that I use the word "crashing," as in "party crashing," as in attending when one is not expressly invited. This is part of what I want to convey: Just go. If you hear of a meeting with an interesting topic, just go. Ask later. It doesn't matter that you might not be a member of the group. No one cares and no one will comment on your party crashing. As a matter of fact, I'll bet the speaker at the event I attended was particularly happy to see one more interested face, since the turnout was appallingly small, less than ten I think.

The speaker, Kimberly Oslob, a Usability Specialist at Macromedia, recounted her time as a usability participant recruiter. Who knew that someone actually performed that function? Didn't you just think that those test subjects appeared as if by magic? I did.

This turns out not to be the case. Oslob spent nearly 100% of her time, during her first two years at Macromedia, as a full-time test participant recruiter. She shared with us that she initially disliked the job of recruiter. When she approached her manager with this problem, he said she would need to document the processes involved so they could bring in someone else and move her to another position.

At times when she was not actively recruiting, she put together a step-by-step recruiting guide. She also spent time updating the company's web site, picking out and ordering gifts as incentives for participants, and conducting small studies to get experience. These small studies moved her further toward her ultimate goal of becoming a Usability Specialist. And, although you can see from her current title that she did achieve her goal, Oslob actually grew to like her job as recruiter. Picking a good test participant, a representative user, is the first step in making a usability test accurate. Oslob learned to love it and she used it as a stepping stone to her current position.

Oslob not only provided a reasonably detailed description for her former job, but she gave out goodies as well. I must confess that the possibility of winning a copy of Dreamweaver was a primary motivator for my party crashing excursion. And she gave out TWO copies. That's the good news, but the bad news is that I didn't win either. I did come away with a CD case though.

This is not the first party I've crashed lately, only the latest. I always come away with a new bit of knowledge and sometimes I come away with goodies. Sometimes the knowledge is a new job skill. Sometimes the knowledge just confirms that others feel the economic downturn as well. In this case, the knowledge demonstrates that creativity and determination produce results. ▲

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## Director-Sponsor Report: May Board Meeting Held in Dallas

by Linda Oestreich  
 Director-Sponsor Region 5

### Discussion Topics

Wow! What a conference, and what a board meeting (held on Saturday, May 17, in Dallas, Texas) to precede it! The general topics of discussion included the upcoming retirement of STC executive director, Bill Stolgitis, and the selection of Peter Herbst as his successor, realignment of membership dues and rebate structure, chapter loans and grants, and the state of the Society in relation to the changing world we live in.

Ed See, now our immediate past president, shared his thoughts about the past year and extended his heartfelt thanks to the board for successfully navigating a tough year that included budgetary reductions, decreases in expected conference attendance, and the selection of a new executive director for the Society.

### Actions Taken at the May Board Meeting:

Approved the minutes from the previous two board meetings.
Approved chapter rebates as follows: Each chapter will receive \$30.00 USD per member for the first 150 members on their rosters; \$20.00 USD per member for each member over 150; \$13.50 USD per member for student members, and \$10.00 USD per sustaining member.
Approved membership dues as follows: regular membership per year will be \$140; student membership dues will be 40% of regular membership dues; and retired membership dues will be 50% of regular membership dues, effective with the dues for the year beginning January 1, 2004.
Approved a chapter loan in the amount of \$3,000 to the Alberta Chapter for the 2003 Region 7 conference, with repayment to begin no more than 60 days after the conference.
Accepted the Society treasurer's financial report.
Approved the formation of a special committee to recommend to the board a means of transforming STC's operational model so that the Society can better support its many communities of practice, enable growth, and stabilize revenue. This ad hoc "transformation committee" is managed by Mary Jo Stark, STC treasurer.
In executive session, the board selected recipients of Chapter of Distinction and Chapter Pacesetter Awards.

### Future of STC

During the discussion that led to the appointment of the transformation committee, the board insisted that the foremost principle of any new approach to STC governance would be to "do no harm" to current processes and entities. Rather, the objective is to look at ways to strengthen the communities of practice within STC and explore how the Society can respond to and support those communities, including the geographical communities represented by STC chapters.

Because of the present global economy and the importance of membership growth to the Society's strength and stability, the board discussed several tactics for increasing membership-both on the Society level and by helping chapters work toward that goal locally.

## Questions or Comments

If you have questions or comments about the STC board of directors or any of the items mentioned in this article, please contact [Bonni Graham](#), the Region 8 Director-Sponsor, or the STC office.

For more information about the Director-Sponsor visit the [region 8 web site](#). ▲

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## Society News

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### Society's Mission

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

### STC 51st Conference: Call for Proposals



STC's 2004 conference will revolve around the theme "Navigating the Future of Technical Communication." The conference is scheduled for May 9–14 and will be held in Baltimore, Maryland.

You can submit your proposal to speak by filling out the Call for Proposals form available on the [STC web site](#). The web site also provides resources for speakers, such as example proposals and information on how to prepare your presentation if it is accepted.

### Books by STC Members

Did you know that the STC web site contains a listing of technical communication books written by STC members? If you have written a book, STC will list it as long as the book has an ISBN number and is available for sale on an online bookstore such as [Amazon.com](#) or [BarnesandNoble.com](#).

Visit the [Books by Members](#) page to see the list of books along with the request form to list your book.

### STC in the News

The job search and advice web site, [Monster](#), has an interesting article [Careers in Technical Writing](#) posted in their career advice section. Although the article focuses on technical writing from the software development angle, it still has useful information on how to get started in technical writing.

The article begins with the following paragraph:

To some people, any job with the word "writer" in the title looks like it must be a blast—the next best thing to working on episodes of "The Practice." So you've seen the title [technical writer](#) in your job search, and it has whet your appetite to learn more. Here's a guide to the profession.

The day I clicked the technical writer link, which displays a search of recent technical writing jobs across the country, there were 574 jobs listed (of course, a couple hundred of these listings were not really writing jobs). There were lots of technical writer titles along with many other related titles such as *Marketing Writer High Tech*, *Proposal Writer/Coordinator*, *Patent Writer*, *Financial Writer*, *Documentation Writer/Trainer*, *Information Developer*, *Grant Writer*, *Copywriter*, *Aircraft Technical Writer and Illustrator*, and *Senior Medical Writer*. It's interesting to take a look at the types of writing jobs offered around the country if you're willing to relocate. It also gives you an idea of the different job titles you can look for.

The article points to the [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#) from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, which states "Demand for technical writers is expected to increase with the expansion of scientific and technical information and the need to communicate it to others." This statement is ironic, considering the number of unemployed technical communicators and the discussions occurring in STC and other writers' groups about how the profession is changing. Nevertheless, it's another voice in the ongoing debate of our profession's future.

## Join STC and Get a Reduced Rate

If you've thought about joining STC, but haven't yet taken the time to do so, now is your chance to get a bargain!

New and renewing members joining on or after November 1, 2003, pay \$140 for the balance of 2003 and all of 2004. New and renewing student members pay \$50. *That's 14 months for the price of 12!*

Become a dues-paying member of STC and take advantage of the "Members Only" resources on the STC web site including:

- Jobs Database
- Membership Directory
- Intercom (the Society's magazine)
- Conference Proceedings
- Publications Search

You can join by using the online or printable [membership application](#) (students must submit a printed application). New member applications are processed within 7 to 10 business days. When your application has been processed, the Society will send your member ID number and temporary password so you can access the members-only section of the STC web site. They will also mail you an STC membership card, a new member information kit, and a receipt. ▲

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## Educational News



by [Karin Johnson](#)  
 EBSTC Education Manager

### What Is a Telephone Seminar?

STC is once again sponsoring telephone seminars. These seminars are reasonably priced and allow you to share sessions to reduce the cost. Keep watching the STC web site for future seminars.

A telephone seminar is much like a large conference call in which the speaker makes a presentation over the phone. As a participant, you simply dial the 800 number from your phone, enter your personal identification number, and you're connected! You then sit back and listen to the presentations and join in the lively Q&A discussion that follows.

**Benefits**

- No travel time
- Pay per site and not per person
- Train all your people without their leaving the office

**Cost** The cost is per site, not per person.  
 U.S. sites: \$145.00 USD  
 Canadian sites: \$160.00 USD  
 All other sites: Please contact the STC office.

**Sign-up Info** [STC web site](#)

For more information on each topic as well as online registration information, click the links below.

<a href="#">Paper Prototyping</a>	Wednesday, September 10, 2003, 1–2:30 PM EDT  <i>Speaker:</i> Carolyn Snyder
<a href="#">Proving Our Worth to Clients and Employers</a>	Wednesday, September 24, 2003, 1–2:30 PM EDT  <i>Speaker:</i> Bonni Graham ▲

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## Employment News

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by [Becky Rude](#)  
EBSTC President-Elect

As this newsletter goes to press, EBSTC and other NorCal chapters are making plans to collaborate with the Silicon Valley Chapter to use their online job list. This cooperative effort will allow participating NorCal chapters to efficiently use resources for getting job listings to members.

**Beau Cain**, Silicon Valley's Employment Information Manager, is spearheading this effort. Beau is planning to visit area employers to help them understand how this service can benefit them in finding skilled technical communicators. Of course this effort will also help chapter members locate work by creating a centralized location for area job listings. Kudos to Beau!

### Looking for Work?

Anyone can view the job listings. Just go the [Silicon Valley web site](#) and click **Employment Resources > Job List**. You will also be able to access the list from [EBSTC's jobs page](#).

### Get Your Employers Involved

If your company is looking for technical communicators, let them know about the site and how simple it is to post the job. (You could even do this for them!)

Posting a job is easy:

1. Go to the [Silicon Valley web site](#).
2. Click **Employment Resources > Job List**.
3. At the bottom of the page, click **Submit Job Openings**.
4. Submit a simple form.

When the form is submitted, the job appears on the web site almost instantly. Employers can also easily remove their listings when positions are filled.

If you have questions on the new job site, contact EBSTC Employment Manager [Ken Evans](#). ▲

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## Book Review: Don't Make Me Think

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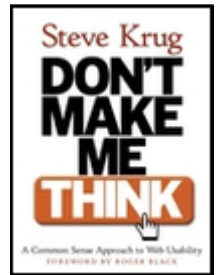


by [Karin Johnson](#)  
 EBSTC Education Manager

Krug, Steve

[\*Don't Make Me Think: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability.\*](#)  
 USA, Que, 2000, ISBN 0789723107

If you ever feel intimidated by usability manuals because you're afraid you won't understand them or the subject is too enormous, but you know you need to read, understand, and commit to memory the basic principles of creating a great web site, then this is the book for you.



### Fun and Interesting

This book is a real page-turner, and it's fun. It's an easy read that can be finished during a long flight. The headings are clear yet humorous, as are the graphics, and the layout allows for generous amounts of white space, making it easy on the eyes.

This is a book about Web usability, or, as author Steven Krug puts it, "a common sense approach to Web usability." The idea is, the less a user has to think, the more usable the site. From our own experience, we know this to be true.

### For Novice

Krug goes over many of the concepts we use often in our own work (the concepts being useful to any form of technical communication), all having to do with comprehension, cognition, intuition, and the like—and brevity. Krug believes that web sites are more usable when they contain only the words that are necessary, omitting superfluous text. He also discusses techniques for navigation, standards, communication, layout, and clarity. He adds a bit about recycling old material. Oh—and how about working within a budget? Yes, he covers that too.

### And Pro

Even experienced communicators may learn a trick or two, or a new way of looking at the same old picture. Sometimes just by rephrasing a sentence you've read a thousand times, Krug brings new meaning to your design experience.

For example, Chapter 8 ponders the "myth of the average user." Krug states, "The belief that most Web users are like us is enough to produce gridlock in the average Web design meeting... The only problem is, there is no Average User. In fact, all of the time I've spent watching people use the Web has led me to the opposite conclusion: all Web users are unique, and all Web use is basically idiosyncratic."

Therefore, Krug explains that there are no simple answers to what is right for most web design questions. He believes that you must use good, integrated design that is planned to meet users' needs and then test the design on real users.

In Chapter 9, his explanation of how to understand what a user really means when

**New Approaches** giving feedback can reveal a whole new approach to usability testing for someone who needs a fresh viewpoint. Particularly effective, the web page examples he uses are from real web sites that many of us have seen in our own browsing. When he discusses the pros and cons of a specific site, the examples give us a clearer understanding of what he is getting at.

Did I mention that this book is funny? For example, the foreword begins, "Steve Krug is blessed with a kind of short-term memory loss that allows him to see every Web site as if he is looking at it for the first time." See? It's a completely disarming and inviting introduction to Joe Average—hey, that's me! Maybe I'll turn the page and find that I will understand this BIG topic after all.

And you will. ▲

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## Notes on the 2003 STC Annual Conference



by [Susan Harlan](#)  
 EBSTC President

### *Note from Susan:*

*Thanks for the generous support of the East Bay Chapter of STC in providing me with a scholarship to attend the conference. I learned a lot and am fixin' to share it with y'all this year.*



**Susan Harlan and Becky Rude** check out the DMV Best of Show award at the newsletter display

The 2003 STC Annual Conference in [Dallas, Texas](#) offered new insights into the current state of technical communications worldwide. We're in a time of rapid change and new demands, so it was important to hear the speakers and talk with other chapter leaders about our profession.

The conference noted the evolution of our role—we're now calling ourselves "technical communicators" instead of just "technical writers." In the near future, we may refer to ourselves as "communicators" and omit "technical" because it will become redundant: in today's technical world, everything we write about will be technical—if not the product, then the medium.

### Bits of Wisdom

A panel session titled "If I'd Known Then What I Know Now" provided excellent information. Our Region 8 Director Sponsor **Bonni Graham**, and **Lance Gelein**, past president of STC and member of the Sacramento Chapter, were among the panelists.

The panel provided the following bits of wisdom.

- If you want work samples, include a statement to this effect in your Contractor's Agreement.
- When a work environment with document reviewers is out of control, consider various options:
  - Create a documentation plan. Be sure there is agreement on the document reviewers, time frame, and review criteria.
  - Send the document to the reviewers with a cover letter stating your expectations.
  - Find out who will serve as the point of contact, the one who will make the decision when six edits come in with different technical answers.
- When the deadline is impossible to meet, provide some alternatives:
  - Calculate the full-time equivalent (FTE) or number of hours to do a job.
  - Use metrics and be wary of using standard numbers.

You must know your customer's industry because writing times vary.

- For example, writing procedures for aviation requires 13 hours per page while software requires 4 to 8 hours per page. Be sure to add a little extra for unforeseen circumstances.

- In making career choices:

- Don't be afraid to try something that's not safe.
- Golden handcuffs are still handcuffs.
- Be proactive! Know what you're good at, and do what you love to do.
- You learn more when you screw up. It's OK to take chances!
- Learn your tools at a technical level. For example, know how fonts work.
- ROI is more difficult to prove than cost avoidance.
- Build great relationships with the people, and then call instead of email.
- Always get it in writing!
- Treat people right.
- When a door closes, go through the window.

## Looking Towards Our Future

The Conference offered a number of sessions about job searches and career options. Topics ranged from "Control Your Destiny" to "Exploring Our Future: Technical Communications in the Year 2013."

One issue critical to a writer's survival in this year of increased "offshoring" is how we define our job. The forecast is that the title *Technical Writer* will disappear. The news may be frightening if you're hearing this for the first time, but it doesn't mean we have to give up or jump ship. Instead, we need to understand the changes and how they affect us, and then survey the options for the future.



**Judy Herr** at the Region 8 reception in Dallas

Several speakers noted that in the future there will be more positions with job titles such as *Information Architect*, *Editor*, and *Documentation Manager*.

## Opportunities and Challenges

STC, as a professional organization for writers, has the opportunity to provide tremendous benefit to its members. From the society level to the chapter level we are aware of the changes and are working together to create a strategic response and outline for possible future career directions.

This fall, a committee will be formed to address "Writing Now and in the Future." Your input is welcome throughout the year. ▲

## How Literacy Outreach Spent Summer Vacation



by [T. R. Girill](#)  
 East Bay Chapter, STC Fellow

*T. R. Girill currently manages the East Bay STC's Technical Literacy Project. For more details about this initiative, check the [EBSTC](#) web site.*

### Overview

As you might expect from an education program, EBSTC's literacy outreach project spent summer vacation on self-improvement. We co-hosted a student field trip, expanded the shared exercises on the chapter web site, and posted another background essay as well.

### Student Field Trip

On June 2, 40 grade-10 students from Oakland's Fremont High School, along with one English and one science teacher, took a day-long field trip to Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL), about 40 miles from their campus. These represented about two-thirds of the Media Academy (formerly called Maynard School) students whom I had taught about writing technical instructions and descriptions during the 2002–2003 school year. The goal of the trip was to reinforce what the students had learned in class and to encourage them to stay in school and learn more.

The focal point of the visit was LLNL's Discovery Center, an exhibit area that explains lab projects to the public. To make the tour more relevant to the background of these students, I asked all the presenters to offer a "behind the scenes" look at how posters were planned and exhibits designed to communicate science and engineering more effectively. Also included was an hour-long "Fun with Science" session, an on-site version of LLNL's interactive demonstration of basic science principles that tours local grade schools.

The day was an adventure for the staff as well as for the visiting students. The Discovery Center is aimed at grade 5, and this was everyone's first attempt to present the material to high-school students (another reason for the "behind the scenes" spin). Also, the normal group size is about 20 (because of room capacity), so this was the first time that we tried parallel Discovery Center and Fun with Science sessions each for half of the guests, then switched halves and repeated both presentations. A bag lunch on the nearby shaded patio, where students talked personally with the presenters, rounded out the visit.

In general, the students were interested, the teachers were enthused, and we met our educational and motivational goals. A montage featuring photographic highlights of this field trip is available at [www.llnl.gov/icc/OaklandStudents](http://www.llnl.gov/icc/OaklandStudents).

### More Shared Material

During the 2002–2003 school year the Media Academy teachers experimented with using journalist Eric Schlosser's nonfiction *Fast Food*

*Nation* in English and science class at the same time. The literacy project developed a long, customized instruction-building exercise to support this cross-curriculum experiment (called "fact checking on the Internet," described in last December's *Devil Mountain Views*). Plain and annotated versions of that material now appear on our literacy outreach web pages for any interested teacher to review or borrow. We also refreshed the project [home page](#) to reflect our work's current focus and to better introduce our full supply of sharable lessons and examples. And last spring's STC Science Communication SIG essay on "Confronting Illiteracy with Scientific Communication" is now linked from the project [resources](#) page, its natural and appropriate home.

Any EBSTC member interested in helping work on literacy outreach during the coming school year is encouraged to contact [T. R. Girill](#). ▲

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## STC as a Volunteer Organization



by [Susan Harlan](#)  
 EBSTC President

The Leadership Day, held prior to the 2003 Annual STC Conference, introduced one of the best speakers this year.

**Mary Merrill**, an expert in volunteerism in the Midwest, spoke to chapter leaders about what is happening with volunteers in the world today. When you think about it, STC, particularly at the chapter level, is a group of volunteers who run the organization and its activities



**Fred Sampson**, Silicon Valley President, and **Susan Harlan** at Leadership Day

### Different Strokes for Different Folks

What I learned is that there are different types of volunteers, and we each have different ideas on what a volunteer does. This was valuable information because it means that we're all correct in our definitions of volunteers! A surprise to me was that the types of volunteers depend on which generational category you're talking about.

What are the differences? A brief history of volunteerism shows the following:

- **Before 1940**—people were very volunteer-oriented and spent lots of time doing lots of work within their groups.
- **Baby Boomers**—are workaholics rather than volunteers. They created a new leadership system of teamwork. Their expectation is that volunteerism makes a difference!
- **GenXers**—are very results-oriented and see technology as a tool. They don't like structure or politics, and they don't take management positions. Volunteering is something they do to help one person.
- **Nexters**—are very civic-minded. They like variety, innovation, and speed. They consider themselves as equals, are very self-assured, and are looking for a cause.

Do you see yourself in there? Maybe your concept of volunteerism doesn't quite match that of your age group, but that's fine. We're

looking for volunteers from each of the modes

## What About Volunteering for EBSTC?

Let's explore some questions that you might have now. Send me an [email](#) message, if you have any comments or questions about volunteering that aren't covered below.



**Gwaltney Mountford**, a dedicated EBSTC volunteer, prepares for her session in Dallas

### How can I volunteer when I have a job and a family, a job and school, or a job that seems like double-time?

*A possible solution is to join an ad hoc committee. This committee might meet once for a long meeting, and then hold a few short meetings or phone conferences.*

### Can I run for president or president-elect without committing myself forever? Do I need long-term experience with the chapter?

*We can't require time commitments like before. If the two-year requirement of President-Elect to President is too great, we might need to reconsider this in the Bylaws. No previous experience is required for the officer/manager positions if you are willing to learn quickly.*

### Did someone say thanks the last time you did any type of volunteer work? Did they expect you to keep doing the same thing year after year?

*The East Bay Chapter will honor people who give years of service and those who step in for a few hours of help along the way.*

### Can you think of some new ways of volunteering or doing volunteer work?

*Maybe the term "volunteering" or "volunteer work" is what turns you off. If we call these activities Action Groups instead, does that make you want to get involved?*

### Would you volunteer (or be a part of an Action Group) if the task involved skill development?

*If you want to try something new in a safe place, this is the place. We want you to learn while doing, and that means "perfection" is not a requirement.*

## High-Tech, High-Touch

Another important thing about volunteering is having fun! Yes, we have some deadlines and need to have quality, but we also need to make volunteering a good experience. We



want the East Bay Chapter to be high-tech and high-touch! EBSTC volunteers join other chapters at a NorCal event

Mary Merrill's talk on volunteerism was inspiring. I came away with ideas that I want to implement as much as possible during the year. Please join us as the East Bay Chapter moves forward! Your voice will be heard and your efforts will be recognized.

The [Volunteer Today](#) web site contains information on Mary Merrill's work as well as other helpful information on volunteering. ▲

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## Lethal Pen

by [Adrienne Tange](#)  
 EBSTC Member

John Kelly, Light Saber's sole technical editor, strode quickly through the dark office building, threading his way through a maze of drab gray cubicles toward his own little stall. In one hand he clutched a Starbucks coffee, and in the other hand he lugged his heavy leather briefcase stuffed with a draft of his company's user guide and tutorial. As a young father, John knew that his love for his 7-year-old daughter Katherine often conflicted with his dedication as an employee. But John had a plan to make both his daughter and his boss happy. He would burn the midnight oil so that he could finish editing both manuals tonight. Hopefully, then he could leave on time tomorrow so that he could take Katherine trick-or-treating for Halloween.



At his office, he laid the briefcase with a thud on his desk, the loud echo reminding him that he was alone in the large empty room. Uneasiness chilled his body. Being alone at night in a deserted building was not his idea of fun.

*Don't be an idiot, he thought to himself. You can only get in here with a card key, so I'm safe.*

He arranged the two manuals side by side on his desk, placed his trusty red editing pen lovingly next to them, and then sat down in his blue standard-issue office chair sipping his espresso. Suddenly, John froze in mid-sip. He thought he heard the creaking of an office chair somewhere near him, like someone was shifting in his seat.

*I thought I was alone, John thought to himself nervously.*

Tensely, he strained to hear if there really was someone in the office with him. This time he heard the clink of something being laid down on a desk, like a pen or pencil.

*There is someone else here, John thought to himself. He struggled with what to do next, the fear momentarily paralyzing him. It's probably someone working late just like me, poor stiff. I'll go see who it is.*

He took a breath to steady himself and then walked slowly down to where he heard the sound. Ahead of him the chair squeaked again. The mystery person was sitting near him.



Walking down the long row, John turned his head to peer into each cube. Five cubes down, he found her. Sitting with her back to him was a small woman with straight white hair that stuck out from her head like a broom.

She appeared to be reading a book lying open on her desk. John knocked softly on her cubicle wall, hoping not to startle her. Mentally, he quickly tried to list every woman with white hair that worked for the tiny startup. Offhand, he couldn't think of one.

The woman swiveled her chair around slowly to look at John. Pale hair framed her small narrow face. From the wrinkles around her eyes and mouth, John guessed she was over fifty. Rectangular black-rimmed glasses perched on her narrow nose. Then John noticed her eyes. They were like shards of blue ice, devoid of warmth, watching and assessing him. He gulped, unnerved by those unfriendly eyes.



"Hello," she answered back, her voice lacking emotion.

"I'm John," he began.

"I know who you are." She waved a thin hand dismissively at him. "We are going to work together editing the Light Saber user guide and tutorial."

John stared at her stupidly for a minute. *Who is this woman?* he thought to himself.

She must have seen the confusion on his face. "I guess your boss didn't tell you about me. He hired me for tonight to help you out. My name is Meredith Pen."

*Meredith Pen?* John thought. He remembered his chattering co-worker Steve babbling on about her. What did he say? Oh, yeah, Steve had said she was a first-rate editor who was legendary. He had also said something else about her that John couldn't remember. But why didn't his boss tell him about her coming?

"Oh, you know how bosses are. We employees are the last to know these things," she said as though reading his mind. She explained that she was a contract editor brought in to help him finish the project tonight. "I hope for your sake you are up to my standards." John assumed she was joking, though there seemed to be little humor in her tone.

"How about you show me the tutorial and I will start on that one."

John stood in her cube uncertainly. He couldn't verify her story because it was too late to call his boss. Besides, she was wearing a badge. Why would someone break into his company, steal a badge, and want to edit a tutorial late at night? John made his decision.

"Do you want me to bring you up to speed on the project?"

"No, I already am." And with that she turned and walked over toward John's cube.



The two worked steadily and quietly over the next two hours. John developed a quick style guide to keep them on the same track and presented it to Meredith.

“Good,” was all she said and then handed him her edited pages. John looked over Meredith’s work. She was good, very thorough and definitely gifted.



She also seemed to have the energy of a younger person. Near midnight they were close to finishing and John was exhausted.

“You are a good editor,” Meredith said behind him, causing him to jump. She handed the last sheaf of edited pages to him.

“And don’t worry, you passed my test.” This time he noticed warmth in her tone and a twinkle in her eye. “It’s time for me to go.” And she turned and left.

She is an odd one, John thought. But he too packed up his things and left for home, too tired to think more about her.



The next morning John stopped by his boss’s office. His boss, Bill Forest, a short, balding, middle-aged man, smiled warmly when he saw John.

“Thanks for finishing last night. I appreciate your effort.” He waved John’s hurriedly penned note from last night in the air. “This is a pretty creative story about Meredith Pen, too.”

“What do you mean?” John asked, puzzled.

“You know. How she helped you out. Pretty good trick for a dead woman.”

“Dead woman,” John echoed.

Suddenly, he remembered Steve’s story. Five years ago, Meredith died in a car accident before completing a big project. The editor who took over did a poor job. When he was called into his boss’s office due to complaints about the manual, he blamed the mistakes on Meredith. Employees said she now haunts offices in this building, testing the worth of editors the day before Halloween. Some inept editors who worked with her later perished in mysterious accidents.

Shaken, John walked back to his office. The first thing he noticed was Meredith’s pen on his desk with a yellow sticky note next to it. The note read:

*I enjoyed working with you. You are a good editor.*

*Have a long life and Happy Halloween.*

*Meredith ▲*



## Ask Elaine: Reining in Apostrophilia



by [Elaine Parrish](#)  
 DMV Copyeditor

If you have an editing question you'd like to see addressed in a future column, please submit it to [Ask Elaine](#).

The apostrophe is a valuable device, but careful writers must guard against becoming so enamored of this little punctuation mark that they bestrew their writing with apostrophes in places they don't belong.



For example, in standard American English, apostrophes are almost never used in simple plural nouns. Consider this sentence advising supervisors how to inform their employees of newly instituted procedures: "*All manager's should print out and share the new policy's with their subordinate's.*" All three nouns in this sentence (**managers**, **policies**, and **subordinates**) are simple plurals and take no apostrophe. Exception to this rule: An apostrophe can be used in a plural noun when confusion with another word would otherwise result: "*There are two a's [not as] and two i's [not is] in the made-up word apostrophilia.*"

Nowhere is rampant apostrophilia more evident than with the pronoun **its**. Even some otherwise excellent writers regularly use **it's** when they mean **its**. This mistaken usage isn't really surprising, since most regular possessives are formed by adding apostrophe + s to the noun (for example, Becky's column, the president's message). So why don't we use it's as the possessive of **it**?

The pattern for forming possessives of most regular nouns is indeed *noun* + *apostrophe* + *s*. But that's not the case for possessive pronouns, and **it** is almost always a pronoun. As a pronoun, **it** follows the same pattern as other possessive pronouns—**his**, **hers**, **mine**, **yours**, **ours**, and **theirs**—none of which uses *apostrophe* + *s*. Thus, you would write, "*The monster combed its [not it's] hair.*" The only possible exception: If you're referring to a being whose name is actually "It"—hardly a situation you'll encounter frequently unless you're a member of the Addams Family!—you can correctly write, "*My cousin It's hair is the longest and greenest I've ever seen!*" In that sentence, **It** is serving as a proper noun, not a pronoun.

In contrast, the word **it's** (with the apostrophe) is always reserved for use as a contraction of **it is** or **it has**.

If you can't decide between **it's** and **its**, here's a quick and easy way to

determine which to use: if you can substitute **it is** or **it has**, then use **it's**. If you cannot, then use **its**. Example: *"It's [contraction of **It has**] been two months, so I think it's [contraction of **it is**] time to give the porcupine its [possessive of **it**] bath."*

### **This Month's Funniest Typos**

Funniest unintentional truth-in-advertising slogan (for a weight-loss system that shall remain nameless):

*"With XXX, You'll Never Look or Feel Better!"*

Funniest verbal typo (overheard in a restaurant):

*"I believe that eating healthy is the key to longetivity."*

Funniest scanner-caused phrase:

*"puke code modulation"*

### **Submit Funny Typos**

Seen or heard a funny typo lately? Submit it to [Ask Elaine](#) for possible inclusion in a future column. ▲

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## About Devil Mountain Views

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### DMV Basics

The East Bay Chapter newsletter is named after a local landmark, Mount Diablo, in Northern California. With a few exceptions, all distances in California are measured from that point, called the Mount Diablo Meridian. The East Bay Chapter serves the cities along the 680 corridor and the east/west part of 580. City-wise it's Vallejo to Pleasanton, Tracy to Oakland and Fremont. We have members from each of those places.

### PUBLICATION POLICY

We are always interested in sharing technical communication trends and information with our readers. For details, contact the Acting Managing Editor, [Becky Rude](#).

### PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

Devil Mountain Views is published bimonthly, five times a year (September, November, January, March, May).

### ARTICLE SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Sep/Oct 2003 issue – Aug 2, 2003

Nov/Dec 2003 issue – Oct 2, 2003

Jan/Feb 2004 issue – Dec 2, 2003

Mar/Apr 2004 issue – Feb 2, 2004

May/Jun 2004 issue – Apr 2, 2004

### REPRINT POLICY

Articles may be reprinted provided credit is given to Devil Mountain Views and the author, and two copies of the publication are mailed to [Becky Rude](#) or the mailing address listed below.

### MAILING ADDRESS

Becky Rude, Acting Managing Editor, 665 Oak Circle, Pleasanton, CA 94566.

### Copyright Statement

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Devil Mountain Views also reserves the right to edit articles to fit its stylistic standards and space constraints. Articles are edited, copyedited, and proof-read before publication. The newsletter also reserves the right to not print articles deemed unfit for publication.

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**DMV History** **Note:** We will update this section as our chapter archives are updated. If you were a Managing Editor during a time frame that is missing from the history, please [let us know](#).

<b>Year</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>2003–2004</b>	Acting Managing Editor: Becky Rude
<b>2002–2003</b>	Managing Editor: Ashwini Tharval
<b>2001–2002</b>	Managing Editors: Ashwini Tharval and Becky Rude. The newsletter is launched online in Web format.
<b>1999–2001</b>	Managing Editor: Teresa Washburn
<b>1997–1999</b>	Managing Editor: Kelly Walker
<b>1996–1997</b>	Managing Editor: Melody Brumis Newsletter name changed to <i>Devil Mountain Views</i> . Susan Moxley won the contest held to rename the newsletter. In July 1996, a spoof issue called <i>East Bay Flame</i> is

	published.
<b>1995–1996</b>	Managing Editor: Bruce Robinson An offshoot, the <i>Twig</i> , is published by President Gwaltney Mountford to supplement the <i>East Bay Log</i> .
<b>1994</b>	Newsletter name changed to <i>East Bay Log</i> .
<b>1962</b>	The <i>Pacifica News</i> was published in the fall in the year the <i>Pacifica</i> chapter was founded. (The chapter was renamed to <i>East Bay</i> in 1982 under President T.R. Girill.)

## DMV Awards

Year	Award
<b>2002–2003</b>	<b>Best of Show</b> , Most Improved in the STC International Newsletter Competition. Managing Editor: Ashwini Tharval.
<b>2001–2002</b>	<b>Award of Merit</b> in the STC International Newsletter Competition. Managing Editors: Ashwini Tharval and Becky Rude.
<b>1998–1999</b>	<b>Award of Excellence</b> in the STC International Newsletter Competition. Managing Editor: Kelly Walker. ▲

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