

Lines & Letters

Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



November 2014

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President's Corner

Membership renewal season is upon us! A hearty welcome to Kim B, Dave B, Cathryn H, Rebecca M, Rachel R, and Rosemary P, who have all joined NEO STC since July. Also, a special welcome to any new NEO members who have joined us from the former Southwest Ohio chapter. We are happy to have you with us!

The STC membership renewal period runs through December 31. You must renew by then to retain your membership status for 2015.

- ◆ See the STC Membership page for the current list of renewal discounts and promotions.
- ◆ New members who join now will receive the remainder of 2014 with a 2015 paid membership.
- ◆ Don't forget, NEO STC also offers assistance for student memberships.

Remember to add the NEO STC chapter to your membership package to receive chapter benefits, including discounted pricing on chapter events, in addition to the STC International benefits.

I hope to see you on Saturday, November 8, for the NEO STC professional development workshop. Ginny Haas, Angie Dianetti, and Jennifer Yaros from Radcom will present This is Personal: Create a Professional Development Plan that is About You! In this half-day workshop, you will learn how to develop a career roadmap; define your personal mission, vision, and goals; and outline your personal professional development plan. For more information and registration details, [click here](#).

And what is a good way to increase your professional development and get the most of out of your STC membership? By volunteering with NEO STC, of course! New volunteers are the lifeblood of our chapter because they bring new ideas and skills to the group. If you would like to get involved with Membership, Workshops, or one of our other fun-loving committees, please send me an e-mail.

Kind regards,

Lisa Mileusnich, NEO STC Chapter President

In the Spotlight: Debbie Mekker

By Lynn Nickels

If you have been to an NEO STC meeting, you probably already know our treasurer, Debbie Mekker!

If not, well, you are about to! Debbie works at Radcom and has been there since March 2012. She splits her time between recruiting and HR duties, and sales support.

This is Debbie's second year as the NEO STC treasurer and we are so lucky to have her! She holds an accounting degree and lives in Newton Falls with her husband, Bill; son, Bryan; and his dog, Luke.

Debbie enjoys volunteering at her sons school and for the Cub Scouts. She said she loves to camp, hike, explore caves, bike ride — and guess what? She even rides a unicycle!

"My nine year old and I are planning to ride as many bike trails in Ohio and Pennsylvania as we can fit in over the next year. We are in the process of planning trips and setting goals for the number of miles we would like to ride between now and next fall," she said.

Debbie also enjoys flying. She earned her pilot's license in 2001, but says she hasn't flown in a few years. She said she went for her check ride (test to become licensed) the first Saturday that the airspace was reopened after 9/11.

Talk of the Town

Congratulate these two NEO STC members who recently started new jobs.

- ◆ Christine Barger is now a Senior Technical Writer of Marketing Global Services at Lubrizol.
- ◆ Ashleigh Petts is now a Documentation Specialist at Hyland Software.

NEO STC at John Carroll University

By Ashleigh Petts

On October 7, three NEO STC members—Janean Voss, Lynn Nickels, and Ashleigh Petts—spoke to students in Dr. Tom Pace's Writing in the Professions: An Introduction to Professional Writing class at John Carroll University.

First, Janean provided a brief introduction to the NEO STC chapter and discussed the student membership funding program. Next, the three NEO STC presenters

divided into groups for roundtable discussions. During the discussions, the students had the opportunity to ask each of the presenters about her background and daily duties:

- ◆ Janean Voss spoke about IT technical communications in the field of engineering.
- ◆ Lynn Nickels spoke about marketing and technical writing about hardware, software, and firmware for industrial automation products.
- ◆ Ashleigh Petts spoke about IT technical communications in healthcare.

In addition, the students completed an interactive exercise.

Many thanks to Dr. Tom Pace for giving NEO STC the opportunity to speak to his class.

In Defense of Getting Personal on Twitter (article review)

Reviewed by Jeanette Evans

"...self-promotion is often viewed as a bit gauche."

"...status hierarchy of the tech scene was partially based on online visibility..."

Should "thinking of oneself as a personal brand marketed online" concern us in our field?

These snippets and thoughts stood out for me when I read [In Defense of Getting Personal on Twitter](#) by Alice E. Marwick (The Chronicle of Higher Education, The Digital Campus, April 25, 2014).

The context in the article about self-promotion being gauche concerns fieldwork the author did for a book she published ([Status Update: Celebrity, Publicity, and Branding in the Social Media Age](#), Yale University Press, 2013). She makes the statement about self-promotion as being viewed as gauche in academe. In a related statement, she says that self-branding is useless in many career fields. I ask myself if an IT or medical professional would benefit from self-branding. My guess is no. But for someone involved in the field of communication, self-branding could set a candidate or individual apart from others, in either a positive or negative way, depending on, for example, the kind of individual an employer wants to hire.

Concerning the status hierarchy statement, Marwick makes this statement in the context again of research she did for her book. She looked at self-presentation

strategies among social-media workers in the San Francisco Bay Area. She raises questions about whether a "work safe" presentation is the best way to go.

As an assistant professor of communication and media studies at Fordham University, the author brings up food for thought about issues such as whether you should Tweet about shoes and use lots of exclamation points. She also brings up the idea that you could use social media with an alias. I kept thinking about how using an alias has helped people of course in situations other than social media so it is certainly an approach to consider, with J.K. Rowling and Mark Twain coming to mind.

There is no one size fits all answer to whether you should "get personal" on Twitter or other online venue or even in your real life. Does anyone care to read about your opinion of barbeque, Le Bron James, good places to vacation, and certain movies? The best answer could be maybe.

Newsletter Promotion Ends Feb. '15

Submit an article by the end of February, 2015, to be eligible for a drawing for a \$50 Amazon gift certificate. Two lucky people can win. Submit at newsletter@neostc.org.