

Lines & Letters

Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



December 2015 Issue

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From the Editors – December 2015/January 2016

Jeanette Evans and Lynn Nickels, Co-editors



Season's greetings to all of you and best wishes for 2016!

As we wrap up the 2015 calendar year, we can look back at some great events and programs. We can also look forward to a new year of great activities.

On Thursday, January 14, Jennifer Yaros will speak on Simplified Technical English. Two days before that on January 12, we have a lunch event scheduled for Quaker Steak & Lube (in Valley View).

That should get us off to a great start for the new year, which includes a lunch in February and a social event in March at the Rock Hall of Fame. Stay tuned for details.

As we move toward spring, we can look forward to a presentation in February on How Machine Editing Can Work for You.

Be sure to check back for details on our March and April programs plus our May banquet.

For those of you attending the upcoming STC Summit, we would all enjoy hearing from you.

Please send your submissions to newsletter@neostc.org. Remember that when you submit an article, you are eligible to be in our drawing for a \$50 gift card. Two lucky people will win.

A change for this and future issues is the addition of this new column, From the Editors.

Current Book Club News

Jill McCauslin

Our January 2016 book selection is *Word Up! How to Write Powerful Sentences and Paragraphs (And Everything You Build from Them)* by Marcia Riefer Johnston. What's it about? "Lots of books can strengthen your writing. Few also leave you smiling. This is one."

With almost 150 5-star reviews on Amazon (and a blurb from someone well-known to NEO STC members!), *Word Up!* promises to be a great source for discussion.

We'll meet at 6:00 at the Independence Panera on Wednesday, January 27, 2016. Most of us order something to eat or drink, but you're not obligated to do so.

We are going to take turns selecting books. If you have a book in mind, let me know so you can make one of the selections.

I've created a NEO STC group on Goodreads.com. We just have to figure out the best way to use it. I think people who can't make a discussion might want to use it to contribute at a different time. Feel free to let me know if you have any suggestions for using this group.

Taking Fun to a New Level at Our Holiday Dinner

Lynn Nickels

Fun and food were a great benefit of our holiday dinner for NEO-STC this year, but the greatest part was being able to visit and catch up with fellow NEO-STC members!



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The Fox & Hound in Mayfield Heights was the venue, and it was a great place to relax and be loud and just have some fun!



For something a little different, and well, funn-e, I decided to record some silly things that were said at the dinner table. Note — I'm excluding names on these quotes to protect the guilty, so see if you might be able to guess who would have said:

- ◆ "Fishing off the company pier..."
- ◆ "Did Dr. Rak ever give you a physical?"
- ◆ "Parker is raining men!"
- ◆ "You can tell it's me because I have no chin."
- ◆ "One guy did, but Queen Latifa did not!"
- ◆ "This is why Kris and I lost touch...because she is a rebel, and I am not."
- ◆ "Is she still gorgeous?"
- ◆ "I take it like a man!"
- ◆ "I almost paid for it myself, but my wife was going to cut off some body parts. But...for \$100..."
- ◆ "I didn't lick it or anything!"
- ◆ "It could be a hard-rock candy Christmas."
- ◆ "For \$50, I've got a deal!"
- ◆ "This candy was criminal."
- ◆ "Open or shut, just let it go to its natural position."

- ◆ "Murder in the cube farm."
- ◆ "She's looking backwards at the letters, but that might be an advantage!"
- ◆ "Thanks for nothing 'snort,' you put it in every which way but loose!"

And finally...

- ◆ "Standing outside butt-ass naked!"



OK, so maybe you had to be there...and even if you were there, maybe you had to have a liquid libation to get some of these, but it sure was fun at the time! Hopefully, you can join us next year and add to the list of crazy, mixed up, funn-e quotes! And, by the end of the night, even Monty had to be cut off!



World Usability Day 2015 #WUDCLE15

Carrie Chiancola

The tenth annual World Usability Day (WUD) was celebrated globally on November 12, 2015. The global theme was Innovation. More than 90 events dedicated to usability were held in 31 countries.

Cleveland UXPA hosted a local event at the new Stillwater Place facility at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. The keynote speaker was the founder and director of WUD, Elizabeth Rosenzweig.

Friends and members of NEO STC in attendance included Carrie Cianciola, Denise Kadilak, Joann Michelle, Kristen Jackson, and Myron Shawala.

The day featured five educational sessions.



Let's Get Real: Creating Tangible Experiences

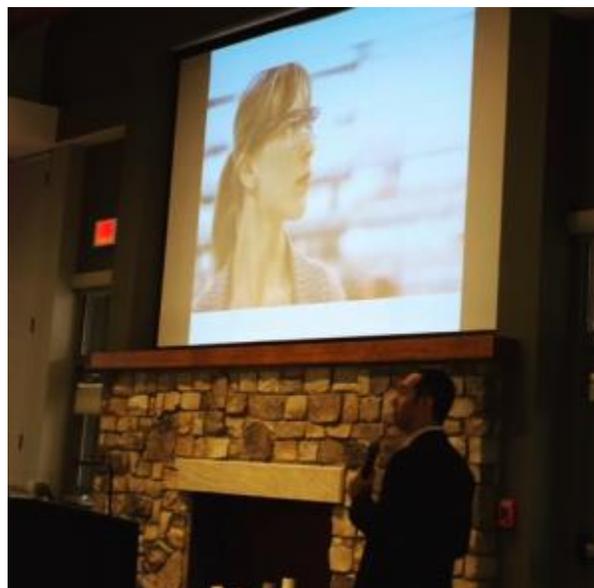
Marli Mesivov | Director of Content Strategy at Mad*Pow
|<http://marli.us>

Content strategist and writer Marli Mesivov kicked off the first session of the day. Marli addressed the challenges of some UX professionals, such as content strategists, who do not create tangible deliverables, but rather create experiences. She challenged the audience to think about how to measure success in a tangible way: If we don't measure our success, we risk missing the mark and not helping our audience.

Eye Tracking in Practice: Real-world Stories from a UX Researcher

Andrew Schall | www.linkedin.com/in/andrewschall

Eye tracking guru Andrew Schall presented an overview of how eye tracking technology can provide concrete proof of the user experience. Some of the data types acquired by eye tracking include fixation mapping on web sites, sequential patterns, and length of gaze.



For technical communicators, this technology can tell us what content our users look at and engage with. Andrew shared several real-world examples of the power of eye tracking.

He concluded his talk by cautioning that data analysis can be complex, and eye tracking is just one piece of an integrated puzzle that must take into account nonverbal feedback, verbal feedback, and direct observations.

Reference

[*Eye Tracking in User Experience Design*](#)

by Jennifer Romano Bergstrom and Andrew Schall

How to Convince Your Boss to Invest in UX

Cathy Zapata | Chief Experience Officer at Precision Dialogue

Cathy presented a brief talk based on her personal experiences in convincing a business to invest in UX. She provided six steps as guidelines:

1. Obtain actual user video, quotes, and scores.
2. Obtain ROI status by using the System Usability Scale (SUS).
3. Make the data visible.
4. Get investors to directly observe.

5. Build case studies.
6. Build a business case.

The UX Landscape

Paul Sherman, Ph.D. | Assistant Professor, Kent State University School of Library and Information Science

Professor Sherman briefly talked about the challenges facing UX in organizations based on his personal experiences as a consultant. He argued that organizational alignment is a key factor in supporting UX projects.

Reference

The Innovator's Dilemma by Clayton Christensen
Good to Great by Jim Collins

Successful UX Workshop

Elizabeth Rosenzweig | Founder and Director of WUD, Principal Consultant at the User Experience Center and Adjunct Faculty at Bentley University

Keynote speaker Elizabeth Rosenzweig lectured and led a three-hour, engaging workshop on user experience. Elizabeth divided attendees into groups to work through the following exercises:

Exercise 1: UX Design Thinking

1. Find a problem.
2. Examine the needs of humans.
3. Put humans at the center.

Exercise 2: Goals and Strategic Models

Building upon the first exercise, Elizabeth asked attendees to create user personas and map project goals against the needs of each persona.

Exercise 3: Getting Buy-in

In the final exercise, Elizabeth asked for two volunteers to role play two contrasting negotiation techniques:

- ◆ Yes, but...
- ◆ Yes, and... (preferred UX design thinking)

After comparing the differences in each technique, attendees practiced getting buy-in for the projects they devised in their first exercise.

Networking

A networking break in the Rainforest provided the opportunity to talk with friends from NEO STC and UXPA, as well as meet unfamiliar faces.



Ohioisms

Brigid Brockway

Like everywhere else, Ohio has its own regional dialect – words, phrases, and grammar that are uncommon in other regions. This language is considered acceptable in Ohio, but may seem incorrect or confusing to outsiders. This article highlights some features of this dialect and gives tips to avoid confusing those who don't speak the local language.

Infinitive Verbs

Folks in the Midwest tend to drop the "to be" from infinitive phrases like "needs to be washed." Outside of the Midwest, dropping infinitives is considered grammatically incorrect.

- ◆ Incorrect
Needs washed
- ◆ Correct
Needs to be washed OR Needs washing

Irregular Verbs

Incorrect use of irregular verbs is common here in Ohio, but cringe-worthy elsewhere.

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Present	Past	Past Participle
Run	Ran	Had Run (not had ran)
Go	Went	Had Gone (not had went)
See	Saw (not seen)	Had Seen (not had saw)

Unneeded ending prepositions

Once, it was considered incorrect to end any sentence in a preposition. Today, most language experts and even many style guides say that ending sentences in prepositions is all right. However, Ohioans tend to insert unnecessary prepositions at the ends of sentences, a practice still considered incorrect.

- ◆ Incorrect
Where's my coat at?
What day is the party on?
- ◆ Correct
Where's my coat?
What day is the party?

Spoken Word

If you record video or audio, consider these:

S-l-o-w d-o-w-n! People in the northeast United States tend to speak very rapidly, making it hard for people from other regions to keep up.

Mind your consonants:

- ◆ Changing is not pronounced changin'.
- ◆ Didn't is not pronounced dint.
- ◆ This isn't pronounced dis.
- ◆ If you aren't sure how to pronounce a word, entries on sites like Dictionary.com and Wictionary.org frequently include an audio file with the correct pronunciation.

Enjoy her photo. Do you know where she took this photo?



The photo is of the Cleveland Arcade/Hyatt.

Outstanding English

Brigid Brockway

It is always a good time to point out the outlandishness of the English language.

- ◆ *Alliteration* contains five syllables, none of which begin with the same sound.
- ◆ *Dactylic* isn't. A *spondee*, however, is a spondee.
- ◆ *Diphthong* doesn't contain any.
- ◆ *Double-u* is a word that doesn't contain a *w*.
- ◆ *Lisp* is hard to say when you have one.
- ◆ *Palindrome* isn't one.
- ◆ *Phonetically* is spelled p-h-o-n-e-t-i-c-a-l-l-y, meaning it is not spelled phonetically.
- ◆ *Polysyllabic* and *monosyllabic* have the same number of syllables.
- ◆ *Tooth* is a word that is hard to say when you don't have any.

Thank you to Brigid for also sharing her photos. Enjoy!



Trends and Disruptions: Some Thoughts

Jeanette Evans and Charles Dull

A look at trends in technology in education and related fields should help us prepare for how these might impact the future of not only education but all learning products that include technical communication deliverables.

The ideas based on this article come from [Three Technological Trends That Set the Tone for Higher Education's Future](#), which you might find of interest.

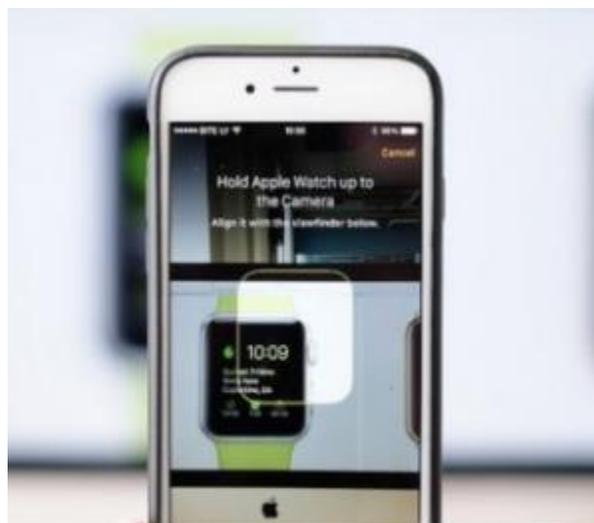


Image via Flickr by Kārlis Dambrāns

Trends and disruptions

You hear today about trends and disruptions. Both can relate to technology and change. Distinguishing a trend from a disruption can be hard.

Looking at the acceptance rates and use can help to show if a technology is a disruption or trend that is here to stay.

The move to mobiles may have been a disruption at one time, but now it is a trend that is here to stay, at least for the foreseeable future.

A disruption today and a trend tomorrow

A current disruption - facilitated by changes in technology - is the massively open online course (MOOC). Technology can manage large-scale enrollment now, so time alone will tell if the disruption provided by MOOCs will become a trend. In MOOCs favor of the idea of this becoming a trend is the fact that they can effectively deliver a good learning product.

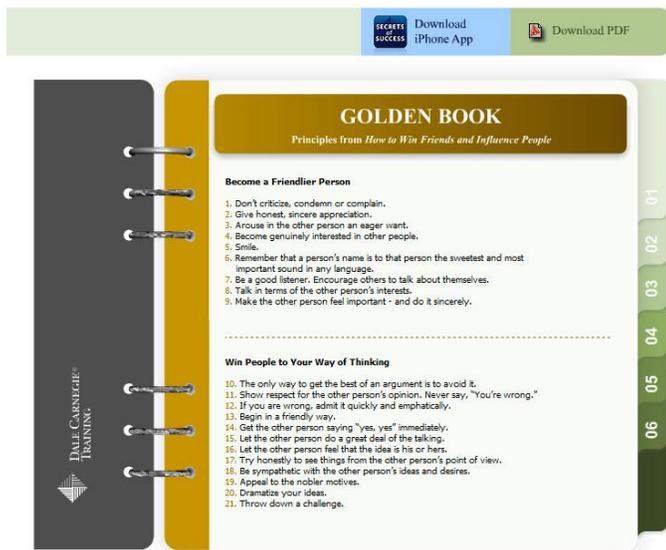
The next step to think about is business models and new learning management systems. How this will impact us as technical communicators and those working in instructional design is still not known, but we should keep our eye on the disruption, possible trend, and evolution of the related technologies.

Book Review: Dale Carnegie's Golden Book

Jeanette Evans

Dale Carnegie's Golden Book, Paperback, 2013, Dale Carnegie and Associates, Inc.

Could Dale Carnegie's ideas still be relevant today? You can judge that for yourself as you look at these ideas that come from his book. Groups such as Tri-C still use his books and ideas today for professional development work. The www.dalecarnegie.com site shows the organization going strong.



Become a Friendlier Person

1. Don't criticize, condemn or complain.
2. Give honest, sincere appreciation.
3. Arouse in the other person an eager want.
4. Become genuinely interested in other people.
5. Smile.
6. Remember that a person's name is to that person the sweetest and most important sound in any language.

7. Be a good listener. Encourage others to talk about themselves.
8. Talk in terms of other person's interests.
9. Make the other person feel important -- and do it sincerely.

Win People to Your Way of Thinking

1. The only way to get the best of an argument is to avoid it.
2. Show respect for the other person's opinion. Never say, "you're wrong."
3. If you are wrong, admit it quickly and emphatically.
4. Begin in a friendly way.
5. Get the other person saying, "yes, yes" immediately.
6. Let the other person do a great deal of the talking.
7. Try honestly to see things from the other person's point of view.
8. Be sympathetic with the other person's ideas and desires.
9. Appeal to the nobler motives.
10. Dramatize your ideas.
11. Throw down a challenge.

Be a Leader

1. Begin with praise and honest appreciation.
2. Call attention to people's mistakes indirectly.
3. Talk about your own mistakes before criticizing the other person.
4. Ask questions instead of giving direct orders.
5. Let the other person save face.
6. Praise the slightest improvement and praise every improvement. Be "hearty in your approbation and lavish in your praise."
7. Give the other person a fine reputation to live up to.
8. Use encouragement. Make the fault seem easy to correct.
9. Make the other person happy about doing the thing you suggest.

Principles from How to Stop Worrying and Start Living

Fundamental Principles for Overcoming Worry

1. Live in "day-tight compartments."
2. How to face trouble:
 - ◆ Ask yourself, "What is the worst that can possibly happen?"
 - ◆ Prepare to accept the worst.
 - ◆ Try to improve on the worst.
3. Remind yourself of the exorbitant price you can pay for worry in terms of your health.

Basic Techniques in Analyzing Worry

1. Get all the facts.
2. Weight all the facts - then come to a decision.
3. Once a decision is reached, act!
4. Write out and answer the following question:
 - ◆ What is the problem?
 - ◆ What are the causes of the problem?
 - ◆ What are the possible solutions?
 - ◆ What is the best possible solution?

Break the Worry Habit Before It Breaks You

1. Keep Busy.
2. Don't fuss about trifles.
3. Use the law of averages to outlaw your worries.
4. Cooperate with the inevitable.
5. Decide just how much anxiety a thing may be worth and refuse to give it more.
6. Don't worry about the past.

Cultivate a Mental Attitude that will Bring You Peace and Happiness

1. Fill your mind with thoughts of peace, courage, health and hope.
2. Never try to get even with your enemies.
3. Expect ingratitude.
4. Count your blessings -- not your troubles.
5. Do not imitate others.
6. Try to profit from your losses.

7. Create happiness for others.

The Perfect Way to Conquer Worry

1. Pray.

Don't Worry about Criticism

1. Remember that unjust criticism is often a disguised compliment.
2. Do the very best you can.
3. Analyze your own mistakes and criticize yourself.

Prevent Fatigue and Worry and Keep Your Energy and Spirits High

1. Rest before you get tired.
2. Learn to relax at your work.
3. Protect your health and appearance by relaxing at home.
4. Apply these four good working habits:
 - ◆ Clear your desk of all papers except those relating to the immediate problem at hand.
 - ◆ Do things in the order of their importance.
 - ◆ When you face a problem, solve it then and there if you have the facts necessary to make a decision.
 - ◆ Learn to organize, deputize and supervise.
5. Put enthusiasm into your work.
6. Don't worry about insomnia.

Adapted from <http://www.nagesh.com/reference/100-golden-rules/182-golden-rules-from-dale-carnegies-golden-book.html>.

The book is available from http://www.dalecarnegie.com/assets/1/7/GoldenBook_English.swf where you can also download a PDF.