

A monthly publication of Certified Networker of Ohio, Ltd
Evolving a community of profitable referral partner

Dates to Remember

March
Toledo Lunch 18

April
Toledo Lunch 15

Number of
members of the
CN community

400

Where is CN Giving Networking Presentations?

March 12, NetSense
Group, Wauseon, Debby

April 7, Findlay Rotoract,
Debby

Contest Time: Cantu Wins with a Can-Do Attitude

And the winner of *International Networking Week's one-to-one meeting contest* is ... (drum-roll please!) **Julie Cantu, Innovative Marketing Design**. Julie is a classic example of "find someone busy, and they'll make time to do more." But why don't we let Julie tell her own story:

As a bit of background, I am a graphic designer. Three months ago, a friend of mine was preparing to open a restaurant, the Ottawa Inn, in Ottawa Lake, Michigan, north of Sylvania. She needed someone she could trust to help get the business started and run the restaurant during the day.

I decided to work in the restaurant to gain knowledge and to build relationships with food and beverage distributors, because my target market is the restaurant industry. I figured that if I do what my customers do, I would experience things from their perspective and serve them well.

While this scenario may not work for all target markets, it works well for mine. That's why I bartend and waitress during the day, while helping to market the restaurant, including designing its promotional materials.



When the networking contest was announced, I thought I had no chance at all. I get up at 5:30 a.m. and design until 10 a.m., then head to work for the rest of the day. I realized, however, that what I do at work is talk to people. So, I started being more intentional about it. Instead of trying to cram my one-to-one meetings into the time away from the restaurant, I started having potential vendors, referral partners and clients come in during my slow times. A side benefit was

that it also helped me spread the word about the restaurant.

Customers come in to eat or drink, and we chat while I serve them. I also have many spontaneous meetings throughout the day. As I chat with customers, I'll uncover a need that they have. I will help them by connecting them with someone I know who can help them. When they are telling me about what they do, I request their card so I can refer them to others as well. I've doubled my network in the past three months by doing this.

Actually, I had many more conversations over the week of the content, but the 21 that I logged were longer than 15 minutes, and we discussed what we do and I tried connecting them with someone or some information that they needed. Sometimes it's not the most obvious path, but by being creative, I found a way to make it work!

Congratulations to Julie!
She's a proven winner.

Findlay Weighs In During the Contest

First runner up in the one-to-one contest, **Lisa Smith, Farmers Insurance**, used the contest to create a guest day for the referral-based networking group, EBN, which she leads in Findlay. Thirteen members and five visitors gathered at the locally favored coffee shop, Coffee Amicis. The agenda was a structured approach where each person had an opportunity to meet with five other individuals. The goal of

the mixer was to ask the question, "How may I help you?" As a result, quality connections were made, with several professionals learning about the Findlay Area Human Resources Association, a group that EBN member Mary Simmons is part of. One member was able to supply a name and contact information for another guest, and Lisa said that in good CN form, she encouraged her member to



call ahead. All attendees benefited from the event with better relationships and new connections. Lisa said that two guests also submitted an application to join EBN. All around, this was a successful event!

It's Horntootin' Time!

Your Board of Action helps to manage our ever growing CN community.

Please thank these members when you have the opportunity.

Jennifer Alford
Creative Financial Partners

Dave Achen
Brennen Financial

Julie Cantu
NWORestaurant.com

Joani Donovan
Ultimate Body, Mind and Spirit

Arlene Gerig
Re/Max Preferred

Sue Greene
DiSalle Realty Company

Karen Kiemnec
Stampin' Up

Linda Kuns
State Farm Insurance

Jeff LaCourse
Summer Breeze Travels

Leasa Maxx
Maxx Grafx

Nick Nigro
Davis College

Sandy Pirwitz
Sandy's Stuff for Women

Jennifer Vaneckhoutte
Interior Design, Davis College student

Angie Weid
Organized Solutions

Jeff Pettit, Artistic Memorials, recently attended the Mid-Atlantic Monument Builders Convention in Baltimore, Maryland, which was held in conjunction with the Monument Builders of North America. Jeff said that this year's lineup had some of the top industry exhibitors and educational programming. It was a great way to network with other monument builders from across the United States and to see what was new in the industry.

Tim Speweik, Mail Works, reports record growth, with Tim's sales seeing an 86 percent increase from 2006 to 2007. Mail Works recently purchased three new pieces of mailing equipment and has expanded to printing billing statements. They also handled a two million postcard mailing for Hickory Farms for the Christmas season.

Frank Smith, Re/Max Masters, and JV wrestling Coach for St. John Jesuit High School, has had another successful year. The number of wrestlers was down, but through hard work and coaching the wrestlers were able to finish third in the city championship. Also, Frank, along with Monica Perez, was chosen to co-chair the NW Ohio Latino Business Expo, which is held in October.

Kathy Stringham, Coffee News of Monroe, says that CN is impacting the next generation. Her daughter Katelyn, a high school senior, entered a college scholarship competition recently. She titled her required presentation, "Hello My Name is Katelyn: Networking and Approachability For the Business Professional." Kathy is a very proud mom. She believes that Katelyn will be better at networking than Kathy ever thought she could be.

Mary Lou Vargo, National City, was nominated for National City's 2007 Excel Award in the National City Heroes category. She was selected as the local winner. Mary Lou was presented with the award at a videoconference held on January 30. The three non-profit organizations that she is involved with will receive \$1,000 each on her behalf. Mary Lou is very proud and honored to have been chosen.

Jody Zink, Loss Realty Group, is excited to have been appointed to serve on the Toledo Board of Realtor's Grievance Committee to review ethics cases and arbitration.

Dave Bodner, Seymour & Associates, MassMutual, is being recognized by MassMutual for outstanding service to his clients. He has been invited to attend the 2008 Leaders Conference in Montreal in August. This invitation is given to the top 25 percent of MassMutual representatives based on their production in 2007.

Megan Coyle Stamos, Coyle Funeral Home, is proud to announce she was awarded VIP status and a trip to the Bahamas for the Funeral Pre-need Insurance Leaders Conference. Last year, Megan had a banner year for pre-need contracts, with over \$1.1 million in business. The Coyle family is also proud to report that 2008 marks 120 years in business through five generations of family funeral directors.

Dave Achen, Brennen Financial, recently attended the 2008 Top Producer Symposium in Chicago. It gave him an opportunity to network and share best practices with other top producers for both MetLife and New England Financial. Dave was invited to be a member of a panel

discussion about networking and successfully developing relationships to grow his practice. Dave spoke about some of the ideas he learned from CN and how they have helped him.

Jeff LaCourse, Summer Breeze Travels and head coach of the Perrysburg High School hockey team, reports that his team won the first-round district game over Findlay, which is a first for Perrysburg in district competition. The win also improved their record to 25-5. In the second round, they will play Bowling Green. A win over BG would present another first for the team, and Jeff says their chances are excellent. Jeff was also runner-up Coach of the Year in his conference.

Sandy Pirwitz, Sandy's Stuff for Women, is excited about becoming a certified BNI trainer for the Membership Success Program. She successfully taught her first MSP class on February 11.

Debby Peters, Certified Networker of Ohio, Ltd, has joined the Misner Foundation Fund Development Committee. She will help with finding contributions, gaining visibility in the community and reviewing grant requests of the foundation.

Leasa Maxx, Maxx Grafx, and Jennifer Alford, Creative Financial Partners, presented on February 5 at Owens Community College's networking fair for graphic design students. **Leasa** also successfully pitched Toledo Free Press Writer Brandi Barhite on the February 10 article titled, "Family Budgets to Leave Public Housing." The cover story featured Ele Ballard and her family, who also appear on billboards that are part of the campaign created by **Maxx Grafx** for their Legal Aid client.

Spotlight on Networking Groups: WEN SEMI hosts local news anchor on March 11

WEN is growing networking relationships across the state line. **Angie Weid, Organized Solutions** and **Cheryl Engfer, National City**, co-facilitators of the WEN Southeast Michigan (SEMI) meetings are very excited to have Rebecca Regnier, anchor from WTVG-13ABC, as the speaker for the

meeting on Tuesday, March 11 at the Bedford Library, 8575 Jackman Rd. in Temperance (about five miles north of the state line). Networking starts at 8:15 a.m. and the sit-down portion of the meeting is 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Rebecca will be sharing secrets of marketing your business in the media.

WEN SEMI meetings always include networking, brief introductions for all and a business educational presentation. Angie and Cheryl say, "Please come. Wear your best and bring a guest." The cameras will be rolling! And remember you will be asked, "What's your handle?"

First Attempt Networking

I believe networking can be mastered if you have a few CN tools in your belt. This is a reflective article about my first experience at an event. (Please remember, I'm a student at Davis College and just learning. Don't laugh too loudly.)

I attended the Masters of Sales event in October. Before I entered, I reviewed *10 Commandments of a Networking Mixer* in Module 9. This was the first event that I attended just after that module. I made sure I had my exit strategy and conversation starters. I also had my cards, planner, pens and Altoid mints ready to go too. I did not have a creative nametag, but much to my surprise, it was furnished at the event. It was the reason for some of my stumbles when talking with people.

I had a goal of five people I wanted to talk to, and I wanted to schedule at least two one-to-one meetings. I was determined to do it.

I put on my furnished name tag and I wrote that I was a Master at Learning. I thought that this was a good *front porch* as author Scott Ginsberg would say. What a great conversation starter! As I made my way through the room, I was trying to practice all that I had just learned. What I found out

was that not everyone there had the same agenda as I did. Most were there for social purposes, not really looking for business.

I did recognize some people from the WEN conference and spoke to them. One person introduced me to Pat Nowak, executive director of the Sylvania Chamber. We started talking about all kinds of things, so she decided to give me her card so we could set an appointment to talk more. Great! I moved on and kept trying. I said I was an interior design student at Davis College and that got me only so far. I said I was looking to meet someone in the design industry or people who dealt with designers. I realized now maybe I could have spiced myself up instead of being so general and matter of fact. I should have said, "I'm studying to become a world famous designer." It sounds more interesting and could take a conversation further.

Overall, I learned that it does pay to let my guard down and mingle. I should never be shy and sit in a chair by myself. I learned that knowing the *10 Commandments of Networking a Mixer* helped. I just had no idea before what to do. It is good to go in prepared. Also, not everyone is going to want to talk to me or me to them, no matter

what I do. I suggest having an exit strategy for that situation. I guess I have to pay attention to what type of event I'm attending and set realistic goals for that time. I really learned that having a *front porch* is a great conversation starter and it causes interest in me. Well, to tell you the truth, it makes me more approachable and easier for us shy ones who are struggling for something to say. These events take a lot of practice to get right and I'm going to fall on my face sometimes, but I'll keep going because it gets easier (or so I've been told).

I wish I could have done my introductions better. I'm sure it would have intrigued people more. I was so focused on my goals and myself that I didn't ask, "What can I do for you?" or "How can I help you?" to anyone. I forgot the importance of that question. Most importantly, networking really gets you where you want to be, faster. Building relationships is really what it is all about. I would definitely take the focus off myself and ask, "How can I help you?" or "What can I do for you?" because after all, in the end, those that give more, receive more. It's the "givers gain" thing. What a concept!!

~Jennifer Vaneekhoutte
Interior Design Student
Davis College

BOA News

Join the community in congratulating **Doug Clark, Fifth Third Bank**, and **Julie Kuney, Comfort Keepers**, for completing multiple terms of service on CN's Board of Action. Julie and Doug graduated from the third and fifth CN classes, respectively, and served four years on our BOA.

They have supported the CN community since graduation by inviting people to events, serving in leadership roles, being a GA, contacting non-profits and recruiting others to take the course. We thank them for their time and effort given generously to our community. And, we look forward to continuing to network with them in the future!

"I realized now that maybe I could have spiced myself up instead of being so general and matter of fact."

~Jennifer Vaneekhoutte

Networking Events March

_Must be an invited guest to attend this event.

Mar 4, Sylvania Chamber of Commerce, 7:45 a.m., Franciscan Center. _

Mar 5, WEN Bowling Green Meeting, noon, Frickers

Mar 7, Leadership Toledo annual breakfast, 7:30 a.m., Parkway Place. Contact Debby. _

Mar 10, WEN West, 11:30 a.m., Loma Linda's

Mar 11, WEN Semi, 8:30 a.m., Bedford Library (MI)

Mar 11, Maumee Chamber of Commerce, 11:45 a.m., Brandywine Country Club _

Mar 11, Monroe Networking Group, (MI) Frenchtown Senior Citizens, 11:30 a.m., Contact: Kathy Stringham

Mar 12, WEN morning meeting, 7:30 a.m., Clarion Hotel on Secor Road.

Mar 13, Women in Communication, 11:30 a.m., Navy Bistro _

Mar 18, WEN Late afternoon meeting, 4:30 p.m., Fort Meigs Museum.

Mar 24, WEN lunch meeting, 11:30 AM, Clarion Hotel.

Mar 27, Springfield Holland Chamber of Commerce, 11:30 a.m., Stone Oak Country Club _

CN Board of Action member **Sue Greene, DiSalle Real Estate**, will be recording events on Google Calendar monthly. The calendar and web link will be included here. Sue needs dates, times and details of organizations' meetings that our community members would need to know. We will publish nonprofit events also, in support of those organizations. Send information to jsgreene@roadrunner.com.

Deflecting with Questions

As members of the CN community, we already get that if we build and nurture a network of relationships, our business will grow almost as if by magic. So, how do we cope with the folks who are determined to use networking as sales? You know the ones. They hand you their card without you asking and then proceed to tell you why you need their services. What's a good CNER to do?

In a phrase: Ask questions.

Ask for help. Deflect their intentions by appealing to their natural desire to help. "Wow, sounds like you've got the corner on the insurance business. Has this event been good for prospecting?" or "I'm debating whether to join this group. What's been your experience?" "Who do you know here? Whom

should I talk with?" Most people will be happy to take you under their wing.

Ask to help. If you are the long-time member, you've got a few options, too. "Who would you like to meet?" "Who are your favorite types of clients?" (They may not know what a target market is.) "What exciting projects have you worked on recently?" "How can I help you?" This last one will often get them to ask what *you* do.

Ask about them. There's nothing wrong with doing a mini GAINS on the spot. "I've heard that real estate has been a challenge recently. What have you been doing to unwind after work?" "What other events have you been attending lately?" "Cool information about your business, but I have a question: Who's your

favorite superhero?" That last one is bound to set them back a bit. Often, though, they will laugh and suddenly become a human being, not a sales robot.

Asking questions will often break the pattern that most people want to follow. By doing so, they can get out of their own way and start building real relationships themselves. If, however, you run into someone who just doesn't get it, you've got one other question you can fall back on: "Have you ever heard of Certified Networker training?"

*~Greg Peters
Cyber Data Solutions*

CN Heads South

While not the first CN class ever in Cincinnati, this new class that started February 26 is the first class in several years. **Gregg MacMillan**, the newest CN trainer, is partnering with Clermont College. They have a training center at the business park where Gregg's printing business is located. **Glenda Neff**, who is Gregg's Clermont contact, is also taking the course.

At the first class, when participants were introducing themselves and also sharing their vision for the future of their business or their job, Glenda mentioned that she can easily fill *credit* courses, but that her challenge is getting folks to register for non-credit offerings. Getting connected with the CN

community could certainly help Glenda to realize her vision.

Some other visions included being able to **eliminate cold calling, to grow market share, to develop stronger client relationships** to foster client retention and to **transition** to more B-to-B type business.

Gregg recently had a preview for the course, at which he had 25 people attend. From that, he assembled a class of 10 students. All represent different types of careers, including a print cartridge refiller and recycler, a financial planner, a real estate professional, a mortgage lender, an insurance sales person, a massage therapist, a floor

care professional, a credit card services person and Glenda.

Gregg says, "I am excited about this class and what it can do for our community. Stay tuned for progress reports!"



Kent Smith, New York Life; **Gina Prickel**, Sibcy Cline; **Vivian Krueger**, Nationwide Insurance; and **Albert Del Gardo**, Global Mortgage, gather around the U-shaped table at the first session of CN of Cincinnati.

Member Spotlight – Robin Isenberg

On a recent cold, crisp morning, I met with fellow CNER **Robin Isenberg**. Needless to say, her smile warms the room and makes her eyes sparkle. Very quickly, I felt like we had been old-time friends.

As Robin talks about the **Victory Center**, one can immediately see how passionate she is about her role as the executive director. She is ready to tell you about The Victory Center and how it serves the community with many special programs.

Robin previously worked with the prosecutor's office, writing grants and organizing fundraisers for juvenile crime prevention. When the executive director spot with The Victory Center presented an opportunity, Robin did not hesitate jumping on board. Her experience in the not-for-profit arena helped her with this new endeavor.

Robin's days are packed from 8 a.m. until way past the



time most of us stop for the day. Her days are filled with running this organization and overseeing her staff of six along with many other contract service providers. In 2007, The Victory Center served more than 400 participants with varied needs.

The Victory Center not only provides services for cancer patients and their families, but they also provide resources to those patients. The Victory Center is not medically based and does

not offer medical advice. They do provide services such as nutrition counseling, massage therapy and exploration of the participant's inner strengths. The center offers fun times too, with scrap booking and dance exercises.

When the center closes, Robin heads home to two beautiful daughters, Morgan and Marissa. Morgan, who recently turned 13, is the levelheaded studious type, and Marissa, age 10, is the lively household member. Robin also finds time to help with school activities for her girls.

When Robin has some time to herself, she likes to take day trips and car trips to Detroit, Chicago, New York and Toronto. She even told me about the "Mega Bus." If you want to know about that, you'll have to have a one-to-one with Robin. It will be worth every minute of your time.

*~Arlene Gerig
Re/Max Preferred*



Therapeutic massages are among the services provided to cancer patients at The Victory Center.

Another View of International Networking Week

Just for fun, we decided to have a "Networking Open House" at our office during International Networking Week. We invited a dozen of our referral source friends together for drinks and snacks. Then we borrowed Master CNER Kathy (Coffee News of Monroe) Stringham's idea and asked them to come prepared with the names of three people or businesses they wanted to connect with.

As our guests arrived, we wrote their names on our easel board, along with their requests. The chart brought to mind the contact sphere spider webs we worked on during our CN training classes. Clay Haile (alias Aiken) from the Scooter Store was interested in an

introduction to someone at the Toledo Area Service Coordinators Association. Deb Arthur from Interim Health Care had a connection for Clay. Deb needed a company to help her patients with transportation. Cindy Hopper, First Call Medical Solutions, could accommodate that request. She wanted to know someone at HCR Manor Care who would be the contact for their patients who need the 'Help I've fallen and can't get up' devices. A few guests volunteered help with that. Sue Dybowski, Travel Experts, is looking for introductions to activity planners at retirement communities. Jan Stainbrook and I invited her to an event we are sponsoring with the

Oak Leaf Village. New business owner, Tami Brodbeck, Saving Grace Home Care, needs a QuickBooks expert, *and* someone who could provide mobility equipment. Yay! That brought us full circle to Clay Haile.

It was exciting to see how many connections just a few like-minded people accomplished. We are all still working on other requests; if you could help any of these folks, please let me know. Oh, and finally: one of us is very interested in finding a McDreamy—I'll make that connection too!

*~Julie Kuney
Comfort Keepers*

Thanks to **Leasa Maxx** and **Doug Clark** for giving to CN by editing and proofreading this month's newsletter.

Participant Registration

Part I

Sponsored by:

Course Location:

Date of Course:

Part II

Name:

E-Mail Address:

Business Name:

Business Phone:

Business Address

Cell Phone #:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Continuing Education Information (Available for Ohio Realtors® and CPAs):

Profession:

License Number:

Official Business Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Part III

Investment Options: (1st payment will be charged 14 days prior to class start date, and next payment will be due the LD of the month in which the class begins, with remaining payments being taken out monthly on the LD of the month.)

_____ Option 1 (\$1299 - Check, VISA, MasterCard)

_____ Option 2 (6 monthly payments of \$226 - Credit Card Only)

_____ Option 3 (18 monthly payments of \$79 - Credit Card Only)

_____ **New for 2008, Option 4 Non-profit rate (\$799 – Check, VISA, MasterCard)**

Credit Card Information: (Circle one) - VISA MasterCard

Card Number:

Exp. Date:

CID #:

Signature:

Your Credit Card Statement will read "CNP of Ohio, Ltd"

Fax form to 419-833-1566 or send to PO Box 1121, Perrysburg, OH 43552. **CANCELLATION POLICY:** Cancellations received less than 14 days prior to the course start date will incur a \$100 processing fee.

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