

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

Dates to Remember

April

Findlay lunch 7

Toledo lunch 21

May

Bryan class starts 4

Findlay lunch 5

Toledo lunch 19

Graduation (tent) 26 or 28

of members of the
Ohio CN community
448!

Where Is CN Giving Networking Presentations?

April 7, GFI, Fresh
Brewed

CN Class

Start Dates '09

Mar 4, Findlay

Feb 27, Toledo

May 4, Bryan

Cincinnati, just
completed a class

Columbus will begin in
the fall of '09

Supporting Each Other

How do I get to where you are?

That question was heard more than once during both the February beginner session of LinkedIn training and the March intermediate session. Leasa Maxx, Maxx Graf, and Tami Norris, Northwest State Community College, patiently answered everyone's questions during the two hours the class participants spent trying to get "linkedin!"

What the participants of these two courses found out is that the LinkedIn website is very complex. Leasa explained how important it was to make sure that our personal profile makes others interested to find out more. There is one box that allows for a description of what you might be doing now or have just completed. Leasa explained that it is easy enough to change this message, so that as your business activities evolve, so should the message.

Connections are important. Some people may have hundreds of connections. Leasa explained that you don't want to try to link with people you don't know because you could be "red-flagged" by LinkedIn, if those who don't know you well enough refuse to link.

At the intermediate session Leasa helped the students to drill further into the depths of the website, showing how to search by company, person, or industry. She explained various reasons that these searches might help a businessperson.

Some feedback from the session that was delivered to Leasa via the LinkedIn Certified Networker of Northwest Ohio group were:

Sandy Pirwitz, BNI, "I'm tired of complaining that I'm techno-challenged, which is why I took both the beginning and advanced trainings. You not only have the expertise, but your teaching style enabled me to believe I really can do this 21st century stuff!"

Smokey Smoktonowicz, Intergalactic Graphics, LLC, "Thank you for conducting the class so professionally. There's just loads of stuff to get used to..."

Participants were all in agreement that this type of training should continue. Perhaps Facebook should be next?

*Sandy Pirwitz
Assistant Director, BNI*



Leasa patiently showing the way.



Bob Werner ready to join the social networking craze.



Tami Norris helps David Bodner find the way.

Networking Question

Recently, we asked CNers how they handle the situation when someone new tries to "sell" to them immediately. **Karen Kiemnec, The Journey**, offers this simple, effective solution: *Karen will kindly ask the offender during a one-to-one meeting, "How about if we take some time to get to know each other first?"*

It's Horntootin' Time!

Your Board of Action helps to manage our ever-growing CN community. Please tell these members "thanks" when you get a chance.

Allison Adkins
Knight Crockett
Miller Insurance

Julie Cantu
360 Graphics

Sharon Czarny
Czarny Insurance

Arlene Gerig*
Re/max Preferred

Sue Greene
DiSalle Realty
Company

Jeff LaCourse
Summer Breeze
Travels

Leasa Maxx
Maxx Marketing &
Design

Nick Nigro
Davis College

Tami Norris
Northwest State
Community College

Jennifer Olsen
Clair David Interiors

Sandy Pirwitz*
BNI

Jennifer Vaneekhoutte
Space Matters

Bob Werner
Re/Max Masters

Sarah Wicks
AFLAC

* Advisor

Angel Millet, Pre-Paid Legal, is very excited to let you know that the Maury Hills Church, in Columbia, TN has asked him to lead two new programs. First, because of the birthday and anniversary cards he sends to all of the adult members using Send Out Cards, he has been asked to lead the new birthday card program for the children. The church is also improving and adding new community assistance programs. Because of his Human Resource background and the book he wrote, Angel has been asked to lead the program to help people that are out of work and looking for new jobs.

David Bodner, Seymour & Associates, Mass Mutual, recently joined the Board of the Toledo Jazz Society. He is looking forward to helping them in fund raising and more visibility in the community. And just maybe, he says that he will find some rhythm himself! Additionally, Dave gave a presentation to a group of Maumee high school students. A number of professionals, including David, spoke about financial literacy and the need for young people to learn about money.

Julie Cantu, 360 Graphics, LLC, is proud to report that her daughter, Lexi, was awarded the special honor of being "Principal of the Day". Lexi is a 3rd grader at Blissfield Elementary. She spent the entire day in the office doing tasks such as reading the morning announcements over the loud speaker, sorting all of the mail in the office, eating lunch with the staff and sitting in on the principal's daily meetings. Lexi was even paid for her hard work, \$40 in gift certificates. She took mom and sister, Leigha, out to dinner with her earnings.

Karla Lewis, Flag City Online and Fat Bottom Productions, recently received the Civitan of the Year Award for 2008 from Findlay Area Civitan. Civitan is a service club, which is part of an international service organization dedicated to encouraging good citizenship, and bettering the lives of mentally retarded and developmentally disabled individuals.

Lisa Olvera, Corporate Intelligence Consultants, wishes to thank all who attended her quarterly networking event Thursday, March 5th, at Tony Packo's at the Park. Approximately 75 people attended and the reviews are in: SUCCESS!!!!

As of February 28, 2009 **Mary Simmons** was in the top 100 producers nationally for **Modern Woodmen of America**.

Production is calculated using annualized premiums of business issued. There may be a connection to the fact that it was in April two years ago she started her Certified Networker class in Findlay. She had to miss a session when her granddaughter Kate was born in Atlanta, but Kate was able to be at her graduation. Mary can't believe that Kate will be two on April 23.

Phyllis Bartholomy, Batholomy Massage Therapy, LLC, wants to keep us updated on her progress at becoming healthier. Currently her weight loss is 63 pounds and 88 1/2 inches of fat gone. She will also be involved with the first annual Body, Mind and Spirit Festival on April 4 and 5.

Debby Peters, Certified Networker of Ohio, Ltd, is proud to announce that she has been elected to the Board of Trustees for Girl Scouts of Western Ohio. She volunteers with the Girl Scouts annually along with CNers, **Lori Cannon, Edward Jones and Darlene Robinson, The William Vaughan Company**, planning and implementing the Camp CEO program.

Sandy Pirwitz, BNI, reports a personal success. She needed to complete the process of cleaning out her garage so that her son could use that space as his Ohio location for his new wine business. Garage is now cleared and the State of Ohio has given their approval for the good ahead.

Arlene Gerig and Judy Gorun, both **Re/Max Preferred** and **Leasa Maxx, Maxx Marketing and Design**, are working on a event called "What's Your Bag?" which will happen May 7th. More details will be forthcoming, but Arlene reports that the postcard Leasa produced is getting people excited about the event.

Linda Fayerweather, Changing Lanes, founder and editor of MondayMorningMotivators.com is pleased to announce that Monday Morning Motivators (MMM) has been selected as a **Constant Contact All-Star**. This honor was bestowed on 15% of Constant Contact's quarter million customers meeting these criteria: average open rate of 15% or higher (MMM is 32%), regular emails during 3 or 4 quarters in 2008 and active for over 2 years. (MMM has been a weekly e-zine since 1999) and received no compliance related complaints or inquiries. CN Graduate **Rebecca Booth** and CN/BNI Director Paula Frazier of West Virginia are also current writers along with Pat Altvater of Transformation's institute. Writers Emeritus are **Debby Peters** and **John Meyers**.

Cheryl Nikolaidis, Etcetera, was recently interviewed by *The Toledo Blade* for an upcoming article on how to dress for your particular body shape.

Dr. Charley Foltz, Ultimate Health Chiropractic, graduated with a doctor of chiropractic degree in August of 2008 from Logan College of Chiropractic located in Chesterfield, Missouri. She will be opening her Findlay office at the end of March. We will all be notified of her grand opening date.

What's That Little Bird Tweeting About?

In our second installment of the technical networking series we are looking at

Twitter (www.twitter.com). This is a rapidly growing site. Currently it is estimated that over 6 million people are registered users on Twitter and that it is the third most popular social networking site falling just behind Facebook and MySpace.

Twitter is a *microblog*. In a traditional blog, the blog owner creates a post and people comment on that post. The blog post can be as long as the owner would like and people are able to read and comment by either subscribing to a feed of the post or by visiting the blog site. Twitter, on the other hand, is limited to 140 character "tweets." Anyone who follows you will receive



the update. You can respond to an update so that others may read by typing in the user's name preceded by an "@"." If you would like to respond to them directly and in private you start your post with DM (direct message) then the user's name.

So why Twitter? I use it for two reasons: environmental scanning and networking. For environmental scanning I follow several newsfeeds including WTOL, Toledo Free

Press and Wall Street Journal. I also follow Bob Latta who represents the district where our main office is located. For networking purposes I follow those I have met through networking groups, those who have similar interests as me or those with whom I would like to do business.

Setting up a Twitter profile is pretty straightforward. You may read your feeds online, through an application such as Tweetdeck or even on a portable device (like your phone). Your Twitter feed can also put status updates on your Facebook profile, but more on that next month...

~Tami Norris
Northwest State Community College

"Currently it is estimated that over 6 million people are registered users on Twitter."

~Tami Norris
Custom Training
Solutions
Northwest State
Community College

LinkedIn But Not Connected

I was having coffee last week with a friend who had recently lost her job. When I asked her how her networking was going she responded, "Oh, really good! I'm on LinkedIn and Facebook already and I'm starting to look into Plaxo." Um, what? For some reason, the idea of actually meeting with people hadn't occurred to her. Don't get me wrong. Social networking sites are great *tools* and definitely can have a place in your networking efforts. They cannot, however, take the place of face-to-face (or at least voice-to-voice) networking. Here are a few reasons why.

Not everyone uses social networking sites. OK, this is a tough admission for a die-hard technologist like myself: Believe it or not, some of the best-connected people in your community wouldn't know LinkedIn from a hole in the ground. Oh, they might have an account. They might even be willing to accept "friends", but other than that, they never visit to see what's going on. That's a problem.

After all, it's kind of hard to make a connection with someone who never walks in the room.

The relationships online tend to be relatively shallow. This makes it difficult to progress beyond mere visibility into credibility and profitability. "Conversations" in these venues rarely last more than an exchange or two. This is the real-world equivalent of saying hello to someone as you pass in the hallway. Real depth of relationship requires that you go beyond the surface questions. Finding out about that other person's dreams and goals, their passions and pet peeves is what makes for a strong connection.

You can't meet new people. Most of these sites are designed to allow you to create an online connection with people whom you already know in the real world. The very mechanisms of these sites make few opportunities to meet and interact with new people. Let's face it. If you are

trying to grow your business or find a new job, expanding your network is what will make this happen. Your existing circle is already doing for you what it can.

Please don't misunderstand what I'm saying here. Social networking sites do serve a purpose. I'm quite fond of Facebook myself as a means to maintain that light "touch" with those I know. Unfortunately, much as we cave dwellers would like it to be otherwise, they cannot and should not be used as our sole networking outlet. The transient electronic signals that convey our message can only be a pale echo of a firm handshake and a smile from a real friend. And that's what networking is all about, right?

~Greg Peters
Cyber Data Solutions

Networking Events April

Must be an invited guest to attend this event.

- April 1, WEN Bowling Green Meeting**, noon, Stoneridge Country Club
- April 7, Sylvania Chamber of Commerce**, 11:45 AM, lunch, Franciscan Cntr _
- April 7, GreaterFindlayInc, Fresh Brewed**, 7:30 AM Findlay Country Club
- April 13, WEN West**, 11:30 AM, Loma Linda's
- April 14, WEN Semi**, 8:30 AM, Bedford Library (MI)
- April 8, WEN morning meeting**, 7:30 AM, Clair David Office Furniture & Design, 6540 W. Central Avenue (*new location*).
- April 21, WEN Late afternoon meeting**, 4:30 PM, Flying Bean Coffee Shop.
- April 23, GreaterFindlayInc, Busienss2Business**, Country Inn & Suites, 8 – 10:30 AM, \$15
- April 27, WEN lunch meeting**, 11:30 AM, Clarion Hotel.
- April 27, WEN Annual Trade Show**, Clarion Hotel, 1 – 6 PM
- April 28, WEN, OGINAD**, (Oh my god I need a drink!) La Scola, 5375 Airport Hwy, Toledo, 5:30 – 7 PM
- April 30, Women's Council of Realtors, Diamonds, Chocolate & Champagne with Style**, 5:30 – 8:30 PM, Toledo Club.

Member Spotlight: Mark Abramson

Mark Abramson is a man of quiet idealism in a world these days that seems to be short on optimism. If his life was already being documented in a history book there would be a theme and it is best said by him: "It's possible for people to change the world even if it's done in little steps."

Mark feels that anyone can make a difference in other's lives. For instance, Mark was thirteen when he realized the profession to which he aspired. It was his grandfather that he admired most, who had fulfilled his own dreams of becoming a prominent lawyer in Cleveland that helped draw him to the same reality. But it wasn't until his grandfather retired and moved to Toledo that Mark really got to know him well. It was through those encounters that brought Mark to pursue a major in History at the University of Cincinnati and eventually Law at the American University in Washington D.C.

Mark came to understand that to be a lawyer you would have to love to read. It seems to fit well, since the law is dynamic and requires a tremendous amount of reading. He reminisces about his days as an undergrad, and one course in which he read a book each week. The text materials were designed to look at history from different perspectives. History in college was more than just names, events and dates or the "History of Great White Men." In college, it required critical thinking where he would be asked to figure out not only what happened but also why the event occurred.

It was through his studies that Mark drew a passion for finding solutions. He finds it most surprising that people in his own profession tell clients "no", rather than understanding the client's goals and looking for another route to the answer. He feels that simply saying "no" is too easy," because it is safe.

He points out that sometimes the answer *will* be no, for instance when the consequences are too great, but that there are often two ways to get to the same end.

Mark took his knowledge and care for his clients first to Eastman and Smith and after fourteen years branched out on his own. He joined the Sylvania law firm of Udell & Abramson in 2000 and after six years started in his current position at Robison, Curphey & O'Connell. He represents small businesses, which are closely held and often family-owned, and medical and dental groups. His firm's main office is located on the ninth floor at Four Seagate, which has some of the best views in all of Toledo.



Mark's hope for his clients is that they become organizationally and financially sound. He focuses on helping each of them build a base so that one-day they can relax and retire. He calls it the end game, stating, "people should love what they do, but they don't need to love to work. The goal is to enjoy life fully." His approach when sitting down with clients is to create that opportunity. He has come to realize that over the years people wait to put money away and work on their business.

Mark is energized by the chance to help others achieve their goals. One of the more exciting events

recently in his life was celebrating his 25th Anniversary with his wife Mindy on March 4. His son, Daniel, just returned from a six-month trip to Israel and graduated from BGSU this past summer with a degree in Music Education. His daughter, Rachael, is currently a sophomore at the University of Cincinnati and is studying architecture.

There are several ways Mark has followed through on the theme of his life. He has been active with the Boy Scouts and is now on the Executive Board. He is a member of Sylvania Rotary and involved in the Sylvania Chamber of Commerce. He is also active in Monroe County, where the Chamber of Commerce has elected him to be on its Board of Directors.

Mark has a love for learning and a passion for teaching as well. It shows in some of his most recent engagements. Five years ago he joined Westgate Toastmasters, to develop his skills in communication. He served as its president and has earned his *Advanced Communicator-Gold*. It was through Toastmasters that he met Debby Peters and John Meyer where he learned the importance of giving back in business as he had done with his personal endeavors.

His willingness to give back what he has learned throughout his career is represented in the fact that he's now teaching a course in employee benefits at the University of Toledo College of Law. In all that Mark has done in his own life so far, you can see how it's sometimes the little things in life that one can do that help make the difference.

~Sarah Wicks
AFLAC

Networking Groups: Chamber Ambassador Programs

From your CN class discussion, you may remember the lesson related to types of networking organizations. Membership in your local chamber of commerce affords you the opportunity to connect with business people in overlapping industries and professions. A casual-contact network, such as this, can be one in a well-rounded mix of networking groups to which you belong. Beyond regular, monthly meetings, though, how can you generate referrals for your business from other chamber members?



opportunities for ambassadors to represent the chamber at business grand openings, new member welcoming events, and to host educational programs that can, ultimately, elevate an ambassador's credibility in the community.

Many chambers offer an *ambassadors' committee* where you can participate as an official representative of good will for the organization. Personally, I have been an ambassador for the Maumee Chamber of Commerce for the last year and a half. Our mission is to make all members feel welcome; to educate members about all the benefits that the chamber offers; and to facilitate connections and awareness for chamber members so that they may remain focused and successful.

The Maumee Chamber's Ambassador Teamwork Program provides

Maumee Chamber ambassadors meet officially one time each month to discuss member feedback and plan future member events and programs. For example, I am currently planning a marketing panel discussion in April that will feature chamber members who offer expertise and experiences on the topic of Smart Marketing in a Tough Economy. Maxx Grafx also gives back to the chamber by donating the design of the direct mail postcards used to promote new member orientation meetings.

CN Grad Greg Peters,

CyberData Solutions, benefits from a similar ambassador program within the Ann Arbor Chamber of Commerce. According to Greg, what he gains and what he gives back to the program is one in the same.

"When I joined the Ann Arbor Chamber, I wanted to immediately start contributing to the organization," says Greg. "By acting as a chamber ambassador, I have given my time to make others feel welcome – and have received referrals that will pay for my chamber membership for the next 15 years."

As an Ann Arbor Chamber ambassador for the last three years, Greg enthusiastically takes on the roll of "seatmate" (when new and potential members attend chamber programs) and "roadrunner" (when he personally delivers chamber welcome bags to new members).

Now, ask yourself, how can you give back to your networking organization so that your business may profit in the long-term?

*~Leasa Maxx
Maxx Grafx, soon to be
Maxx Marketing and Design*

Thanks to Allison Adkins, Knight Crockett Miller Insurance Group, for giving to CN by editing this month's newsletter.

NEW IN MAY:
Dee Appt will begin a new article series next month. She will spotlight members as they tell about really wonderful referrals they've gained as a result of CN. Expect a call from Dee or if you don't want to wait, give her a call at 419-215-3996.

Community Opportunities

Each month CN grads AND students have to opportunity to cross class network at two separate events. One is the first Tuesday of the month in Findlay. Currently that group is meeting at Red Pig Inn on Tiffin Avenue from 11:30 AM to 1 PM. Lunch can be ordered from the menu with the availability of separate checks. Fred Schmits is the organizer of the group.

The third Tuesday of the month, you can attend the Toledo lunch. It is held at the Spaghetti Warehouse, on Huron St, downtown near the Mud Hen's Stadium. CNers gather at 11:30 AM for casual networking and ordering of lunch. Cost is \$11 with cash or check (CNP of Ohio, Ltd) accepted.

The goal of each lunch is to allow for CNers to meet and develop relationships with others in the community. We also have a little fun with the question of the month and a short educational moment. Plan to attend one or both of the lunches this month!

Help Others to Join Our Community

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 (\$1399 - Check, VISA, MasterCard) (This is for Toledo classes, only)

_____ Option 2 (6 monthly payments of \$249 - Credit Card Only) (This is for Toledo classes, only)

_____ Option 3 (18 monthly payments of \$83 - Credit Card Only) (This is for Toledo classes, only)

_____ Option 4 Non-profit rate (\$849 – 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".
A \$10 administrative fee will be charged for NSF checks and each time a credit card is declined.,
All fees charged by the institution will be added to the student's financial responsibility.

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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