

NCTV Promotes Media Literacy

BY GRACE ALLEN

Last month, Norfolk Cable TV took part in the nation's first Media Literacy Week. You could say they were ahead of the game: back in September, the station held a Media Literacy Month.

According to Katy Woodhams, NCTV's Executive Director, the station's Media Literacy Month was a natural complement to another September event, National Literacy Month. Woodhams, who graduated from UMass Amherst, had a solid foundation in media literacy at the school and thought the community could benefit from a month-long event at her station.

Media literacy aims to create thoughtful users of digital media, and teaches safe and responsible behavior online.

The station's Media Literacy Month in September included workshops, drop-in technology help, and documentary screenings. During the month, NCTV drew the attention of the organizers of Media Literacy Week, and the station was asked to partner with the national group for November's event.

"They found us because of our hashtag," said Woodhams.

Canada has held a Media



NCTV's Katy Woodhams

Literacy Week for the past 10 years, but this November was the first time the United States participated. Only 100 media outlets across the country were official participants this first year, and NCTV was one of them.

Woodhams said Media Literacy Week at her station was simply a shortened repeat of September's month-long series. Both events served to illustrate the technology

and media needs of the community, as well as determine the kind of content and education NCTV can provide in the future. The station hopes to partner next year with the library and schools, offering speakers and media education for all ages.

This year's events were also geared toward all ages, but the biggest group of participants was over 50. According to Woodhams,

workshops on social media and its privacy controls were especially popular.

"It's something our generation has taken for granted because we've grown up with it," said Woodhams, "but the older generation doesn't know what they are looking at."

Woodhams, who graduated from KP High School in 2007, was active in the school's award-winning KPTV program. Because of that connection, NCTV has collaborated with the high school, sharing equipment and borrowing KPTV's drone.

Woodhams is perhaps uniquely qualified to lead the local discus-

sion about media literacy. She is, after all, young enough to understand the possibilities and pitfalls of the digital media age, but also cognizant of the electronic generation gap.

"Parents don't necessarily know what their kids are doing online," said Woodhams. "They don't know what's acceptable and what's not acceptable."

She added, "The internet is a permanent thing, and once you put something online, it's there forever. Media literacy is about protecting yourself, protecting your friends, protecting your family and become a responsible contributor to media."

Norfolk Boy Scouts Offer Tree Pickup

Norfolk Boy Scout Troop 80 is organizing a Christmas tree pickup service for Norfolk residents. The deadline to register for the collection is January 6, 2016 and the pickup is slated for Saturday, January 9, 2016. Participants should leave their tree next to the street by 9 a.m. The fee is \$10 for trees up to 10 feet tall and \$15 for taller trees; senior citizens will be charged \$5. Checks should be mailed to Troop 80, Norfolk Boy Scouts, P.O. Box 523, Norfolk. To sign up for the collection, provide your name, address and phone number via e-mail at treestroop80@gmail.com

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