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Message from the Editor

Dan Buonodono, VP Publicity



Greetings,

Welcome to the third edition of Maximum Bloat, our annual spoof issue! If you would like to contribute an article to this edition, give me a call and maybe we can work something out. You never know!

The Chapter Editorial Board – the folks that help put this newsletter together each month – originally thought that this issue would be a spoof on Professional Development Day. Well, as you will see, we took a stab in that direction, but did not get too far.

Please do not be offended if you do not get a great deal of project management best practices, lessons learned, current happenings in the field, etc. Again, this edition is for fun and holiday cheer!

Parts of this edition of Maximum Bloat are factual, some are fictitious. This will be your only warning! We actually have a real-for-life advertisement (paid!) by our friends from Cheetah Learning.

Back to the Editorial Board members... If you like what you have been seeing in the pages of Maximum Float over the last several years, please show your appreciation by giving them a well deserved attaboy/girl/man/woman! As many of you know, these folks are normally reserved individuals (as they always request to be on the last page of this publication). Well, this month, like it or not, I am putting their names in the headlines – on the front page – a space normally reserved for the eminence himself, the Chapter President... what's-his-name... Well anyway... here they are, from left to right, front to back, starting with the one and only Mr. Grey Matters himself,

See Editorial Board, continued on page 9

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Programs Corner

Pam Sawatzki

Please join PMI for the January Dinner meeting, when we learn how they put the “Fix on 496”. Steve Shaughnessy from the Michigan Department of Transportation will be speaking on January 15, 2002. Our dinner meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn-South, our new venue. Steve has served with the Department of Transportation for eleven years. Steve will be highlighting the project and how with the use of incentives this project was completed in a timely fashion. It is chance to ask all those questions that you had about this high-visibility project.

Our bonus speaker for the evening will be Lori Watson. Lori has been in project management for sixteen years, and has been with EDS for eleven years. She will be speaking on “Lessons Learned” covering the different PMBOK areas relating to Lessons Learned. This program begins at 5:15pm.

Mark down February 19 on your calendar as we welcome Rajiv Das, a Senior Technology Manager with Accenture. He will be talking about “Leveraging Project Management Metrics for Success”. Rajiv has managed several program management offices at different client sites and has a lot of experiences to share with our organization.

The bonus speaker for February will be Amy Piper. Join us as Amy discusses “Barriers to Change in an Ever Changing Work Environment.” Amy will be addressing changes within an organization. This presentation will discuss barriers to change, change behavior and some transition strategies to move you to the desired state of change.

I hope that everyone has a Happy Holiday season, and look forward to seeing everyone at the dinner meeting in January!

One more meeting or ‘Gathered in the Manger’

By Judith (Judy) E. Walsh



Project Management of a team in the Christmas season can give you the blissfulness of seeing many folks in the songs of imitating animals from the famous history of the manger scene. If you step away from the obvious hustle and bustle of the time that you spend together and look at the interaction of your team, the excitement of the holiday can give you a new perspective for your meetings. Let me explain.

On a cold night, animals gathered in a shelter and made themselves comfortable around an event that wasn't the usual happenstance. Not to a shepherd's surprise, the ox and ass would stand by the camel and sheep intent on viewing a small child in the manger and their place of refuge.

The ox moos and lows the tune of a lullaby.

The donkey brays of the good news.

The sheep blat a chorus of music.

The camels hum a content tiding of joy.

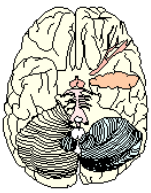
The animals carry an excitement of the progression of the planned event.

As your project is unfolding according to your plan, there are times when things do happen as they should. No matter how different the players on your team may be or where they meet, they can appreciate some of the events together.

There is a time when you can stop and see the happenings and sing the joys of the event. It may not be as monumental as the birth of a child, but the joy is in the eye of the beholder. As Project Manager, don't overlook the events in which your team can gather around and sing about.

Many Project Managers look to the Project Closeout for celebration and for the appreciation of events that took place. Enjoy the moments of peace and joy during the journey. There are events that happen in every day life that are significant in the history of the team. Your shared 'refuge' of your project meetings is where everyone can stand together and view 'the child being born.'

Take the time in your project to see the good things that are happening as your team of people interact. You will enjoy the journey a little more and see your history in the making.



Grey Matters

Random Thoughts on Project Management

by Daniel Belcher, Contributing Editor

Christmas

I continue to encourage my kids to believe in the Christmas fantasy. My six-year-old is getting wiser by the minute. The day will soon come when she will ask Santa for the most expensive gift or the seasons most popular toy that sold out to extinction. I can almost hear her voice, "If Santa doesn't bring me _____ then I will know the truth." I am sure many parents stretch their pocket book or patience just to preserve the fantasy for one more year.

My four-year-old is still easily brain washed. This year she wanted a wooden toy refrigerator, stove and all the accessories that she saw in a magazine. Price tag around \$400. I did make a wooden fridge and stove for far less money but was sure my six-year-old would suspect that Santa did not make it. She would probably prove herself right through DNA samples from the fridge that would confirm the blood was from my skinned knuckles and not elves.

My co-conspirator (wife) who is an experienced manipulator easily convinced the four year old that the refrigerator and stove was too big for Santa but he could bring the accessories. The four-year-old bought the story, somehow forgetting that last year Santa brought her a bunk bed (see January 2001 Grey Matters <http://www.pmi.org/chap/mcapmi/January2001Newsletter.pdf>).

For the last two years there have been sleigh tracks on the roof outside one of our bedrooms. There are also Santa tracks leading up to the chimney and back. Kids today grow up watching movies that use amazing special effects making anything appear real. If you watch a movie from 20 years ago (when I was a kid) the special effects that seemed real enough then look completely phony today. As technology increases it makes it difficult for a Dad to compete. To keep up with Hollywood this year the roof will be complete with yellow snow and milk duds. I suppose this follows the philosophy that if you are going to lie, make it a good one. I sure hope it snows otherwise the milk duds will end up in the stockings.

Happy Holidays!

MAX & MAXINE

BY LARRY SELVAGE

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The Christmas Dinner Project

Elizabeth Chaney, Contributing Editor

Problem: Your house has been selected to host the holiday dinner party. That means that you will have 10-15 family members expecting a wonderful meal.

Initiation Phase: Resources - Recruit a team of cooks, 4 -5 family members who are attending the event.
(2 weeks) Define deliverables (menu) – meats, vegetables, breads, desserts, table decorations, drinks

Determine everyone's role and responsibilities (who brings what)

Planning Phase: Estimate budget for the items that you are cooking for the dinner - \$125
(1.5 weeks)

Turkey 20 lb.	½ Honey glazed Ham
Cranberry sauce	pineapple slices
Turkey gravy	Cherries or other garnishments
Vegetables	Pound Cake (all ingredients)

Create grocery list of items that need to be purchased and quantity required.

Communication Plan- Telephone all cooks and give them the full menu and let them select what items they will contribute. Verify items being brought for the meal 3 days before event.

Schedule dinnertime and inform everyone by who will be attending. Detail tasks for meal including preparation time for each item.

Execution Phase: Based on the preparation time for each menu item, use the finish to start approach. With dinner scheduled for 4 p.m. be sure that you schedule all food to be ready at 3:30 p.m. giving you a 30-minute lag time in case something unexpected occurs.

For example: Turkey needs to thaw out in the refrigerator for 14 hours prior to cooking. Based on the weight it needs to cook for 3 – 4 hours. The ham is pre-cooked so it just needs to thaw in the refrigerator the night before and then be place in the oven to warm on low heat for 1 hour. Dessert is a Pound cake and total preparation & cook time is 2 hours. Since the turkey will be cooking for a long time, prepare the cake the day before or early in the morning .

Check the china, glassware and silverware the day before to be sure everything is ready to use and does not need washing or polishing. Be sure that you have enough of each item to accommodate your guest.

Note: If you have several items that need to be cooked in the oven, you have to include that in your time allocation for each dish.

Control Phase: Request that all meal items are delivered the day before or 30 minutes prior to dinner time.

Close Out Phase: Successful dinner with plenty of food and drinks for everyone.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!

MAXIMUM BLOAT

Michigan Capital Area Chapter Newsletter

Volume 0, Issue 3 December 2001 www.pmi.org/chap/mcapi

A Lump of Coal

- PM's Christmas:

As a young boy, Patient Man was, for the most part, a challenge for his parents to raise. On his third Christmas, he had been particularly challenging to handle when friends and relatives visited for the holidays. As Christmas morning came, all the children ran to their stockings to see their joys.

Patient Man dumped the contents of his stocking on the floor and found a lump of coal. Watching all the other children stick their small findings in their pockets, Patient did the same. He saved that lump of coal and kept it on his dresser.

Many years passed and with helpful guidance from his father, Patient grew into a man. After college graduation, Patient was greeted by his father who was holding the lump of coal from his dresser. His father asked him if he remembered the Christmas when he received that lump of coal. Though Patient didn't remember anything about the day, he remembered that it had been a present. His father said, "Remember the years that have passed and all the pressure that you have had with studying and preparing for this graduation. This lump of coal was you when you were little." To Patient this made no sense, so he wrote off his father's statement because, in Patient's eyes, his father was getting old.

Many more years passed and Patient's career moved ahead and he now was a Manager for a big company. In such a busy career, he married late and then had a small family of his own.

Time passed and he could only visit his folks at the holidays. This Christmas was going to be strange; his father was near the end of his years. Christmas morning came. His father sat in the corner of the room watching the grandchildren and others open their gifts. Then, Patient gave his father a small present. All his father asked was, "Where's the lump of coal?" Caught off guard, Patient didn't know what to say. But, his father continued, "I don't expect you to give me the coal. Now that you are a grown man, what I expect, is for you to pass on that piece of coal. You're good, PM." Then, after a long pause, "All PM's must start as diamonds in the rough. Now, you must learn to pass on your knowledge."

So, the next Christmas, PM passed the lump of coal to his young son. Not only was he doing it for his father, but now he could also understand what it was to be a mentor. He knew every new PM deserves to be given a lump of coal.

Sent to us by Judy Walsh, Contributing Editor



Dear Maxine,

Why do you continually try to help Max? He seems clueless without you on his shoulder?

Questioning in Quincy

Dear Questioning Quincy,

It's just a part of my new assignment as Project Queen of the Universe! There are many other things in the works for me... Stay tuned in the months and years ahead!

Have a great Holiday Season and a safe New Year!

Maxine



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UN-DEVELOPMENT DAY

Ouija Boardgamean, has arranged for the Chapter's first Un-Development Day. The date is set for April 1, 2002 at the Capital City Convention Center. Tickets are \$50 in advance or \$200 on the day of the event. All payments must be paid in cool hard cash! Since we do not trust Project Manager types **no checks or credit cards will be accepted**. See the next issue of Maximum Bloat for more details. You can not afford to miss this ground breaking event. Just check out a few of our proud sponsors.



DOC R BOK

Do you take the PMBOK too seriously? Do you consider everything a project? Does changing a light bulb require a WBS, Risk Analysis, Schedule, etc.? Then stop by our booth. We are Doctors Removing Body of Knowledge or DOC R BOK for short. Whether it is shock therapy, acupuncture, exotic drugs or brain surgery we can remove all traces of the PMBOK from your mind. Only then will you have your life back and be able fit in with your fellow TV watching Americans. Stop by our booth to speak with our satisfied customer and enter to win a free shock therapy session (persons with pace makers or pregnancy are not eligible).



PM Eye

At PM Eye we take everything seriously. We use the latest technology to gather the information you need to be a successful project manager. Whether you need a risk eliminated, water cooler bugged, team member surveillance, or management blackmail information; PM Eye is there to help. We guarantee that we can make any project successful or your money back.

In addition PM Eye has just introduced new services guaranteed to stop your competing projects. We found that our loyal customers were having problems competing against successful Project Managers who actually read the PMBOK. Due to our philosophy that our customers should be number one we have hired several lawyers that are adept at frivolous lawsuits. All it takes is a little paper work and that pesky project that was gathering all the limelight will be tied up in court for years. Stop by our booth or else!



Feeners

Market research shows that IT personnel consume large quantities of caffeine but desire an alternative to coffee. Here at Feeners we have developed many products with enough heart pounding caffeine to keep you awake during any meeting, training, or project. Concerned about your health try "Strom Cloud" our caffeinated rocky mountain spring water. Need that quick tasty snack try our "Eye Pop" microwave popcorn with caffeinated salts. For you Generation X computer programmers try our liquid caffeine drink "Jupiter Moon Juice". Stop by our booth and try some free samples that are guaranteed to keep you awake during the days boring sessions. Also register to win a Feeners catered office party!

Daniel Belcher, Contributing Editor

Un-Conference Session

Elizabeth Chaney, Contributing Editor

"React or Respond? Dealing with Difficult People in the Workplace"

Managing a project team always presents challenges, not the least of which is dealing with different personalities. This session will give you a few good tips to know when not to approach difficult people at work. Prior to going to work each morning, it is good to check your horoscope and the alignment of the moon to be sure about what your day will be like. Many people change with the rotation of the moon and can be difficult to work with. Try to avoid responding or even reacting to them when the moon is full. Listen to peoples voices and notice the tones and fluctuations. If they are irritable, be sure that they are not working on a critical portion of the project. Learn these valuable tips and more by attending this session.

Funny Thing About Those Reindeer

Or

Thoughts from a PM who's heard too many 'Twas the Night before...' repeats.

This is the time of year when children and some parents too, dream of the arrival of the jolly old elf and his 'team' of reindeer.

♪ On Dasher, on Dancer,
 On Prancer and Vixen,
 On Comet, on Cupid,
 On Donner and Blitzen... ♪



Ever think that your team should be limited to those eight reindeer? 'Flying reindeer' no doubt?

♪ To the top of the floor,
 To the top of the wall,
 Now dash away, dash away,
 Dash away all. ♪

Feel like you're the jolly old elf driving the 'team' to do amazing, if not unbelievable feats?

Isn't it interesting that reindeer get fed a magical feed and fly Santa all over the world in one night? Where's the magic feed when we need it? Purina sells reindeer checkers. Maybe there's a 'supplement'?

What's the magical feed you use for your team? Do you only use it only one night a year? Is it only as a supplement?

The miniature sleigh that the reindeer pull carries a magical sack that holds all the toys for all the good girls and boys.

What magical sack is loaded in your miniature sleigh? Is your sleigh the right size for your 'team' to pull? Is your sack full of toys for the girls and boys?

The team of reindeer fly their trip around the world in one night and through the wintery weather. But, if needed, Santa knows that he can rely on Rudolph who waits for that foggy night to join the other reindeer.

When you make your sleigh run to finish 'your flight', do you have the reserve for the foggy night that may unsuspectedly appear? And is its' success dependent on one 'being'.

Isn't it a funny thing? They're called a team. Is your 'team' magical?

Here's wishing some magic food will make its way into your stocking.

Merry Christmas!

Judy Walsh, Contributing Editor

Membership Corner

Maureen Myers, VP for Membership

As of the end of November, the Michigan Capital Area Chapter has 203 members. We'd like to extend a warm welcome to our members who have joined in the last few months. Our newest members include:

Judy Allard, Jeanne Carey, John Dullock, Kevin Hutchings, Robert Patteet, Sharon Pizzuti, Wade Thompson.

Membership Anniversaries in December

Vaughn Bennett, John Dougherty, Dale Ewing, Linda Hobrla, Michael McDonald, Debra Mosher, Jan Osborn, Shirley Rouse

Have any ideas on attracting new members, or organizations that are implementing project management offices or methodologies? If so, please send your suggestions to myersm3@state.mi.us. **Happy Holidays!**

Program Events Schedule

The Chapter Dinner Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month, September through May, excluding December. The Dinner Meetings are held at the Holiday Inn South Hotel and Convention Center. Bonus Programs are held prior to dinner meetings from 5:15 to 6:00.

Costs: Dinner costs are \$25 for members and \$30 for non-members. Anyone who does not pay in advance will be charged an additional \$5 at the door. If you are not pre-registered, we may be unable to accommodate you due to restaurant limitations.

January 15, 2002 -- Chapter Dinner Meeting, featuring Mr. Steve Shaughnessy from the Michigan Department of Transportation, "Putting the Fix on 496" – Lansing Holiday Inn South.

January Bonus Program – "Lessons Learned", presented by Lori Watson from EDS

February 19, 2002 -- Chapter Dinner Meeting, featuring Mr Rajiv Das, Accenture, "Project Metrics"

February Bonus Program – Ms Amy Piper, EDS, "Implementing Project Management: A Cultural Change"

March 19, 2002 -- Speaker: TBD

March Bonus Program – Mr David Szary, Founder of Recruiter Academy (tentative), "Seeking employment in a 'Bear' Market"

Tips, Quips, and Quotes

Compiled by Liz Chaney, Contributing Editor

Advice: Something we test out on others to see if it really works. C. Bowles

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