

ELICITOR



May, 2014

Thoughts from President Beverly Sells



I was asked to write a newsletter article about what excites me as President and a preview of what's to come.

Let me take you back in time.....

Enter Center stage, a search on the internet finds a professional organization with the name of Central Iowa Chapter of IIBA®. I asked myself, "Who are they? What do they do? Will they meet my needs?"

Being the business analyst I am, I couldn't leave it there and said to myself, "Bev, you got to go check them out".

Enter Left stage, Central Iowa Chapter of IIBA® monthly meeting. From that

first meeting, I found the organization I wanted to be a part of. The content of the meetings continued to grow, networking opportunities abound, and I was growing in the profession.

Enter Right stage, my excitement about CIC IIBA® grew so much I wanted to be a part of the board to help continue to grow the organization. It was time to give back!

To Present time



Last year has been a remarkable year. I have seen teamwork within the board to move the organization forward through new and innovative ideas.

I'm excited about:

- The newly structured website for IBADD! If you didn't know, we have a domain name all of our own.
- The board and our ability to share working documentation in SharePoint.

- Membership is growing! We've reached our highest membership count ever as of March 2014.
- The launch of our new payment submission system.
- Excellent programs each and every month.

What's to come? If I had a crystal ball it would show:

- Business Analysts looking for a professional organization, FIND US.
- Having a very successful IBADD 2014 by breaking the 400 mark for attendees.
- Successful Monthly meetings with a participant survey returned rate of 45% or greater.
- Volunteers approach the board in droves, filled with excitement and enthusiasm to help the chapter be the best it can be.

Thank you for being a part of this journey. I hope that your own past, present and future involves the Central Iowa Chapter.

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Congratulations to recent central Iowa CBAPs!

- Rajdeep Sayania
- Audra Bonner
- Tamara Heeren
- Yuliya Maksimova
- Christina O'Hare
- Courtney Vos
- Nathan Henn

Have you ever wondered what it takes to host a monthly meeting?



By Andrew Walling
President-Elect,
Past Director of Programs

Hosting a meeting means planning and creating everything from catering, parking, speaker, site, volunteers, membership lists, security, and name tags, for the 120 plus members of the Central Iowa Chapter IIBA (CIC) get together.

As Director of Programs, it was my duty to schedule speakers and sites, and then feed the attendees in a fast and semi-healthy way.

When I took over the job 2+ years ago, Central Iowa Chapter had few partners for hosting meetings, with most locations being downtown. As our membership grew, that wasn't as convenient for our western suburb friends (Wells Fargo, Aviva, Pioneer, and Farm Bureau just to name a few!).

I started reaching out to meeting attendees and asking who has space for 120+ folks the 4th Thursday of the

month. And if anyone reading this wants to volunteer a site, contact us at program@centraliowaiiba.org

Finding speakers is the main challenge to planning a monthly meeting. During my time as Director Programs, I challenged myself to find speakers across the US (and once from Canada) to come speak at CIC.

I received suggestions from other Chapters, other BA Development Days, other industries, BBC and professional training companies.

As a non-profit, we can't afford to pay these speakers their normal "speaking rate", so many of them present to the chapter for little more than cab fare for their trouble.

"Many of our speakers present for little more than cab fare for their trouble."

Another challenge is catering. Feeding over a hundred folks in a timely manner is a true hurdle. Dietary restrictions, religious observations, beverage preference and our limited window for

eating, create a lot of competing stakeholder needs.

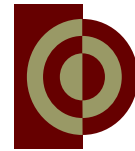
I tried to balance the challenge by giving the chapter meeting attendees the ability to select or build their own plates. Salads and sides are available and not pre-selected for you.

Because we are limited by the location to the catering that is allowed on the premises, sometimes we're not able to accommodate everyone's needs.

Ordering beverages is also a headache, with some sites charging more for bottled water than they do for sodas or iced tea. At our March 2014 meeting, we had water, iced tea, and a large variety of sodas available, but certain selections went faster than others. One thing I do know, is that our members love Diet Coke!

Lastly, thank you. I wouldn't have had anyone to plan these meetings for, without our members and non-member monthly meeting attendees. I really did strive each and every month to deliver quality programming, at a convenient location, with a decent lunch, to provide you true value for the time you dedicate to your professional development.

As I leave this post, Sara McIntyre will be taking the role to new heights as she transitions to Director of Programs for the next 2 years, and I cannot wait to see what comes next!



Ready for IBADD?

LEARN | PRACTICE | APPLY

May 16, 2014

IBADD has a new look and feel this year. The IIBA Eastern Iowa chapter joins our chapter this year to make IBADD a true Iowa event. The Meadows Events & Conference Center is our new venue that will allow for a more spacious event, with plenty of free parking.

Instead of the normal three options per session, this year's attendees will have four options to choose from. One of the sessions will be hands-on, two-hour workshops.

New for 2014

New this year, IBADD will feature a post-seminar networking event. Details will be provided in the event guide. It's a great opportunity to talk through what you learned. See you there!

We are not alone: a Vision of Partnership



By Carrie E. Bowen
Director of Partnerships

If there is one thing that I have learned from being a part of this IIBA chapter, it is that “we are not alone.”

There are so many great companies within central Iowa that support the mission

of our chapter and the vision of our board. They provide educational materials, meeting spaces, professional development opportunities, and speakers.

From financial support to sweat equity, there is a local business making sure this chapter has what it needs to be successful.

As the newly elected director of partnerships, I am excited to work with all these amazing companies and learn why they continue to invest in us.

My vision for Chapter partnerships is to redefine what it means to be a partner with our chapter to open up new opportunities for our loyal supports and gain new partners.

I will be reaching out to local resources like training companies, educational institutions, and other professional groups to enrich our financial status, educational resources, and networking opportunities.

BABOK Guide v3

In early April, IIBA President and CEO Stephen Ashworth announced that the review of A Guide to the Business Analysis Body of Knowledge® (BABOK® Guide) v3 will be available to the public on May 12th.

According to Stephen, Version 3 was developed with the input of hundreds of business analysis community members worldwide and this BA review process ensures the *BABOK® Guide v3* reflects and supports the continued evolution of the profession and remains the internationally recognized standard for business analysis.



New Website for IBADD 2014 and Continuous Improvement



By Phil Marcuson
Director of Technology

Over the past 6 months, a few dedicated IBADD Volunteers and Chapter Board Members have been hard at work helping to prepare and launch a totally new website for our Chapter’s premier annual business analyst development day: IBADD. (<http://www.ibadd.org>).

Hundreds of hours have been invested in bringing this new web experience to Iowa’s Business Analyst community.

To demonstrate the return on our investment, we’d like to share a couple notable stats from the month of March 2014:

The IBADD website will have reached over 1,800 unique worldwide visitors making up almost 8,000 page views. The new site will also have processed several hundred credit card orders.

“I’d like to extend an invitation to those technically-minded individuals who may be interested in joining a Chapter Website and Technology Committee.”

This is significant for two reasons: 1) The Chapter’s newly appointed Director of Treasury & Finance, Andrew King, was able to establish a new merchant account and payment gateway that will save the Chapter a significant amount of money in

credit card and registration processing fees; and 2) The Chapter now has a technical framework for providing seamless payment options for members, partners, and event registrants that will enable better service and improve

cash flow. These are but a few of the many accomplishments our volunteers have executed over the past few months; however, I know we still have a few bumps to iron out and plenty of to-dos still on the roadmap.

I’d like to take this opportunity to extend an invitation to those technically-minded individuals who may be interested in joining a new Chapter Website and Technology Committee. If you have a knack for writing HTML or love to explore new web services, please send your contact information to: webadmin@ibadd.org.

Central Iowa Chapter IIBA Finances



By Andrew King
Director of Treasury/Finance

As a business professional, it sometimes takes a certain event to force you out of your comfort zone. This transformational event happened to me recently when I was approached to step in as the Finance and Treasury Director for the Central Iowa Chapter. My name came up, I accepted the nomination, and was voted in.

To step in as a director of a growing non-profit organiza-

tion to manage and track the finances... well, it looked to be a big challenge to say the least.

In the past 3 months, I feel like we've accomplished quite a bit:

1. We delivered the budget for the chapter for 2014, which is always important for any organization, but we took it a step further. On a monthly basis, I pull all transactions from our accounts and actually match them on a report to the individual budget items. This way, each director understands a) how much they've already spent this year, and b) how much they

have left to spend for this year. Maintaining the budget is critical to keeping the organization going.

2. The item that I'm most pleased with is the implementation of a Wells Fargo Merchant Account that partners with Authorize.net. It is used as a replacement for a previous vendor that we used for the online IBADD registration payments. In previous years, we had spent several thousands of dollars on just processing the incoming payments for registrants, and now with this implementation, we are expecting to see more than an 80% re-

duction in those expenses simply by utilizing this service. This is a HUGE win for the chapter from a financial standpoint, as we can now allocate those otherwise "wasted" funds to other aspects of the organization. 3. The monthly transaction reports have been reduced to only report single month activity (i.e. in March, I only add transactions to the report that actually occurred in February). This helps with tracking, and prevents transactions from being missed or erroneously duplicated.

I look forward to 2014 as a year of personal challenges for me. I can already hear from the others that the efforts we put forth are having a positive impact on the Chapter!

"This year we are expecting to see an 80% reduction of fees for processing IBADD registrations."



A Vision of Membership



By Melissa Mosbach
Director of Membership

I want to take the business analysis skills we use in our everyday jobs and apply them to my role.

I will begin by understanding the current processes related to membership and why they were implemented. I will look for ways to streamline these business workflows and ensure they align with the right roles. My goal is to help save board members time on business tasks so they can enjoy work-life balance.

I need to take the time to integrate our membership records into our new system.

This will centralize our data and ensure that we have one system as our source of truth for membership data.

As I gather this information, I want to compile it into a reference guide that can be provided to future board members to outline the Director of Membership role, what is expected, and how to perform the duties.

Finally, I want to understand

how we maintain our membership and how we can increase the number of members in our local chapter. I want to create a focus group with fellow people in our chapter to generate new ideas!

Are you interested in participating in a group? Or do you have some new ideas to attract or retain members? Please email me at membership@centraliowaiiba.org

Updates from the Nominations Committee

By Teresa Celsi
Chair, Elections Committee

The Nominations Committee is comprised of Chapter members willing to volunteer their time and offer assistance to the Board to facilitate the election process. Kathy Bianchi and Jon Harcey volunteered for this committee in 2014, and were a big help in driving out new technology and all of the many tasks that need to be completed in order to have a successful election cycle.

Election Buddy Tool

In 2014, we rolled out a different election tool called Election Buddy. This applica-

tion was much easier to use, and also provided more features to the membership, such as links to view each candidate's bio/ qualifications, proposed by-law changes, etc. right in the ballot. We were also able to use the reporting functionality in the tool to gather metrics. We will be utilizing even more features of Election Buddy in future elections, such as communication reminders only to those members that have not yet voted during the election.

Lessons Learned

Each year after the Board election closes, the Nominations Committee meets with a few members of the Board

to discuss the nomination and election process, and document Lessons Learned that will be incorporated into future elections. For example, we implemented the Election Buddy tool in 2014, since the application we used in the prior election did not meet our needs.

Next Steps

The Nominations Committee recently completed their Lessons Learned session, and will be updating the Election Guide to incorporate all the changes that occurred in this past election cycle. We will also change the name of this group going forward to the Elections Committee.

One of the bylaw changes approved by the membership is the

dates of the Board member's terms. The terms will end on December 31 instead of April 30. Due to this change, we will be moving the election timeframe up, and this process will start this summer with a Call for Nominations for the following Board positions:
Director of Education
Director of Communications
Director of Treasury & Finance
Director of Website & Tech.

Volunteer Opportunities

Please consider volunteering for the Central Iowa Chapter by running for one of these open board positions, joining the Elections Committee, or reaching out to a current Board member to discuss other needs in the chapter.

Upcoming Events:

May

- 6th—Board Meeting
- 16th—IBADD

June

- 5th—Board Meeting
- 27th—June Chapter Meeting, 11:30 am

July

- 10th—Board Meeting
- 19th—July Chapter Meeting, 11:30 am

August

- 12th—Board Meeting
- 28th—August Chapter Meeting, 11:30 am

IIBA Central Iowa Agile Discussion Group

Have you been working on an agile team for a while now? Are you just starting to work on an agile project? Have other teams at your organization started using agile approaches and rumor has it you'll be on a project in the future? Are you just interested in learning more about agile from others who are doing it? If you answered "yes" to any of those questions, then the IIBA Central Iowa Agile Discussion Group is for you.

The discussion group meets on a monthly basis and gives business analysts in Central Iowa the opportunity to share stories and experiences, ask questions, or hear what others have to say about the intersection of business analysis and agile.

In the past, we've simulated an agile project, had guest facilitators who shared experiences while facilitating, and had wide ranging open conversations. Topics are usually up to the interests of attendees, so if you have a particular question, come to the next discussion group, and you can help guide the conversation.

If this sounds interesting to you and you are a member of the Central Iowa IIBA Chapter, please contact me (kentjmcdonald@gmail.com) to RSVP for the next agile discussion May 20 from 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM at the Urbandale Library 3520 86th Street, Urbandale Iowa.

Central Iowa Chapter IIBA®

Working to strengthen the presence and understanding of business analysis.

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Chapter Website:
<http://www.centraliowaiiba.org>

IBADD Website:
<http://www.ibadd.org>

Central Iowa Chapter IIBA Socially

 CIA_BA

 IIBA Central Iowa



Thank you QCI for your sponsorship and dedication to our chapter!

Willingly edited and published by Ann Stough, Director of Communications, and Caron Osberg, Treasured Committee Member.

Have an idea or article suggestion? Write me:

communication@centraliowaiiba.org

Letting Go – Shoes and All, by Denise Mernka

As I end my term on the board, I leave owning the record for holding three board positions, one right after the other. I have been Director of Communications, briefly; Director of Finance less briefly; and Director of Membership for over two years. It has been an amazing experience to work with people that are so dedicated to the Chapter's mission.

When turning over Finance to Brian Larkin, we moved chapter finances from EXCEL to financial software on a dedicated, chapter laptop. Brian took it and ran with it; our finances are now much more accessible and closely monitored. Our chapter was growing when I took over membership and it continues to grow. Today we have 319 members in good standing, the most we have ever had. I would like to take credit for this but the growth is the result of everyone's efforts. Thanks to Phil Marcuson, our chapter is moving to a CRM. Chapter membership records have already been transferred to the CRM. The possibilities ahead for our chapter are exciting!

While I have done BA work most of my working life, sadly, I have never held the title of BA. Back in the late '70s, early '80s, if a woman worked in a corporation, it was assumed that she was a secretary. There is certainly nothing wrong with being a secretary; it just wasn't me. I knew I had different skills and wanted to be recognized for the skill set that I offered; thinking outside of the box was/is normal for me. I felt obligated to wear a "power suit" and, of course, the complimentary "power shoes." For many years, I did not know that my skill set was that of a BA.



In 2007, my department at work was hungry for BA knowledge and found our local IIBA chapter on line; several of us signed up for a meeting. It was shocking to find a very new (2006), international organization that mirrored the way I thought. For years, I had tried to be recognized for the very same unique skill set that IIBA promoted. I found myself in a room of like-minded people who were just as eager to learn as I was. Keep in mind that in 2007, 30 people might have attended a monthly meeting. Today we average 115 at each monthly meeting.

Some times we forget that as BAs, we think analytically and process thoughts in a unique manner. Our minds simply do not process thoughts in a run of the mill sort of way. And, if you haven't figured it out yet, we are not normal. We take things apart and put them back together, while most people would prefer to not take them apart in the first place.

Just like my '80s "power" shoes, letting go of my board position of Director of Membership is OK. I turn it over to Melissa Mosbach, a very capable person who will take the processes that I developed and make them better. She will make changes and find better ways. That is the way it should be – continuous improvement that only a BA could do.

I keep my power shoes as a reminder of this long BA path that I have traveled. Today, I wear lots of Birkenstocks because I don't need power shoes to pump me up; I can do that myself.

You know you have a stressful job when...



By Ann Stough
Director of Communications

As I walked through my office the other day, I noticed that most team members had stress relievers of some sort on their desk. To the unobservant eye, it may seem that the employee is juvenile to have toys displayed. That observation couldn't be farther from the truth.

Functional decomposition got you stumped? Break out the squeeze ball. User story is a novel? Grab the bendy thing. You know you want to.

My totally unscientific opinion is that physical manipulation of an object while contemplating action will bring a decision faster than staring

at a computer screen alone. Got toys? Don't hide them in a drawer, display them proudly. Don't got toys? Get to IBADD May 16th.

Until IBADD, here's pictures of creative objects that belong to creative (and sometimes stressed) people I know. See you soon!



Volunteer Help Wanted for Newsletter committee. Writing, editing and planning skills desired, prior experience with Publisher preferred. Please contact Ann Stough at communication@centraliowaiiba.org.