

In-the-SPIN

Newsletter of the Boston@SPIN

Issue 53 Spring 2004

10th Anniversary Issue

Editor: Judi Brodman

From the Editor

It seems like it was just yesterday that a small group of us were planning what the Boston SPIN would look like – writing the charter, finding a place to hold our meetings, and laying out our structure. Through the years we have introduced the Roundtables where ‘like kinds’ can gather including the Book Club. We are a group of volunteers who produce the Newsletter, the Boston SPIN web site, who man/woman the welcome table at meetings, setup the food, send out meeting notices and run the SPIN organization (our very dedicated Boston SPIN Steering Committee). All of these activities are performed by people who, through the years, have given up much of their own time and effort to make the Boston SPIN the thriving, energetic organization that it is today - a vehicle for networking, finding jobs, and gathering information from well known software professionals or from the wonderful articles in the Newsletter.

The *In-the-SPIN* Newsletter started back in January 1995 with Sallie Hoffman Satterthwaite as the editor. The first issue contained a book review, a KUDOS column to Charlie Ryan for completing the process of making us a non-profit organization, a single article, and the first ‘Dear SPIN Doctor’ column. Carol Pilch took over as editor in October 1997 and produced the Newsletter until spring of 2001 when she handed over the reigns to Sheila Lynch and me.



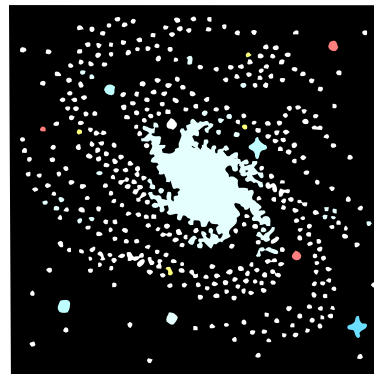
HAPPY 10th Anniversary Boston SPIN and may we continue to evolve and serve the needs of all of our members for many years to come!

Judi Brodman,

Editor, *In-the-SPIN* Newsletter

Birth of the Boston SPIN

By: Judi Brodman and Barbara Purchia, two of the co-founders of the Boston SPIN



Long ago, far away in another century, a small group of gallant crusaders met in a small office at Hanscom Air Force Base, Bedford, MA. Dedicated to forming a Software Process Improvement Network (SPIN) in the Boston area and armed only with their experiences and the burning desire

to start this new ‘colony’, this fearless group met for many months planning and executing this bold vision. Using the knowledge of the only other existing SPIN, which was in Washington, D.C., and a little help from the SEI, these brave men and women toiled over charters, by-laws, non-profit status, organizational structure, and a myriad of other details knowing that all this minutia would be needed if they were to successfully launch their dream.

These founders continued pushing on, meeting week after week, under cloak of darkness until finally everything was ready for the launching this new endeavor. A final check showed that they had in place the Boston SPIN Charter that even to this day stands as a monument to their valiant courage, their search for the future, and their unending desire to break new frontiers for the Boston software civilization.

But we jump ahead ... let’s return to the beginning. Their leader, Joe Farinello, was approached about pursuing this dream of an independent Boston SPIN by two women (Judi Brodman and Donna Johnson) whose lives had been, to that time, dedicated to the pursuit of improving the software civilization. Joe’s response was quick and decisive, ‘Yes, there would be a Boston SPIN’ and he offered a place where they could meet with little chance of discovery. The two women were tasked to find additional humans who would be unafraid to help with this pioneering effort. Barbara Purchia was approached and accepted the challenge willingly. The group grew – Ray Dion, Sallie Hoffman, John Brackett, Ed Coun-

Boston@SPIN Established January 1993
Software Process Improvement Network

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cil, Dan Nash, and Charlie Ryan. These men and women toiled week after week after week. And then one day, they were ready and all was in place – except - they lacked a place to prosper and spread the knowledge necessary to help others in the software civilization. And so a search was initiated to find a place where they could speak freely and encourage others to come and grow in knowledge. A place was found – a group welcomed them and offered them space and food and assistance – the place was known then as GTE in Needham. And the group rejoiced in their newfound fortune!

And so, in the annals of history, the Boston SPIN colony started on the night of January 19th, 1993. It was small group at first, but as the word spread, the colony grew and continues to grow and prosper – even to this day - there now being over 500 of them!

SEPG '95

SEPG 95 Conference Boston SPIN Committee



Can you name the committee members?

Answers on the back page!

Committee Memories

Happy Birthday, SPIN!

By Johanna Rothman © 2003

Fall 1993. I'd just heard of this group, the Boston SPIN. I was an SQA Manager in a local company, and concerned about how to make progress with the process improvement and quality initiatives I was pushing. Mark Paulk was speaking about the CMM, and in the same building I'd started my technical career (GTE, on B Street in Needham). I had to go. I made sure to wear a suit, got to the meeting a few minutes early, and was completely intimidated. There must have been 80 people there, all wearing suits, talking about the CMM as if they'd already achieved Level 4. Was I in the wrong place?

Joe Farinello opened the meeting talking about SPIN, and how we were going to be the local sponsor for the SEPG conference in Boston in April 1995. He needed volunteers — and volunteers attended the conference for free. I signed up to be the BOF chair.

Winter 1993-Spring 1995. I attended most (if not all) the SPIN meetings (with about 40-50 other people) and most of the SEPG planning meetings. I learned a lot from Joe— especially the need to separate the chair of the meeting from the meeting note-taker, and how to facilitate a meeting of 13-20 people, where everyone had strongly held opinions. The meetings were hard work, so in the interest of injecting fun, we started bringing jokes to the meetings. I only know knock-knock jokes, and I won the informal award of “youngest sense of humor” (“JR, you have the sense of humor of a 7-year-old”).

As part of my BOF chair responsibilities, I recruited four people to facilitate BOFs for me: Dale Emery, Michael Hyde, Frank Alla, and David Eddy. I've stayed in touch with all of them since the conference, and have worked with each of them in some capacity since the conference.

I wasn't done with SPIN volunteering after the conference. I volunteered for the Steering Committee, and held elected positions on the Steering Committee from 1996-2000. Over the years with SPIN, I've learned a lot about process improvement, I've made friends, and I've had a blast working with my fellow SPINners.

Now, I rarely wear a suit, the Steering Committee tries very hard to make the first-timers (and second- and third-timers too) welcome. We regularly have 80+ people at the meetings. We've come a long way, and I'm proud to have been a part of our progression.



Happy Birthday SPIN!

Ten Years, But Who's Counting?

By Barbara Purchia © 2003

Over 12 years ago I was a new professional in the software process arena. My software company had decided to pursue improving our ability to deliver software products with predictable, repeatable results.

We were using the Software Engineering Institute's (SEI) Capability Maturity Model (CMM), which at the time was a set of questions. We went to SEPGs. We got training. We got started. Little did I know what a profound impact this would have on my life.

Judi Brodman and Donna Johnson interviewed me for research they were doing on software process improvement activities in small software companies. And that's how my friendship and foray into SPINdom started.

Over the past 10 years, I've been fortunate enough to meet and learn from some of the leaders in our profession (Watts Humphrey, Tom Gilb, Tom DeMarco, Tim Lister, Bob Grady, and Jerry Weinberg to name just a few) as well as from the members of the Boston SPIN community who have presented and provided insight into their victories, challenges, and even mistakes.

This journey has expanded my personal horizons. I've made presentations, written articles, reviewed books and articles, and even been a contributing author for a few books. I have held various positions in the Boston SPIN Steering Committee and am now Chair.

It has been a pleasure and an honor serving the software process community over these many years.



Congratulations Boston SPIN on your 10th year! And thank you Boston SPIN members for keeping the process going!!

Happy Birthday Boston SPIN!

Ten Year Thoughts...

by Dolores McCarthy © 2003



For the past ten years I've attended Boston SPIN meetings off and on. Most recently it's been more on than off, since I've served as Secretary for most of the past four years. Attending SPIN meetings has been beneficial professionally, through learning both practical applications and new concepts from the experts SPIN has had as speakers, and by receiving answers to my questions about process improvement from colleagues there. If you want to spark up a dull evening, come to one of the informal Boston SPIN Roundtables in the early evening before the program. You can count on lively discussions on a variety of software related subjects. I've enjoyed both attending the Roundtables and leading some. You can always meet new people and learn something. If you have experience to share, that's even better. The Boston SPIN has newcomers at every meeting and always many who've attended before. At work I spread the word around about the meeting topics, which have proved constructive for several people. Hope to see you all bringing in colleagues for the next ten years!

Dear SPIN Doctor

Happy 10th Anniversary!

by Judi Brodman © 2003

Dear SPINners:

First I want to say how proud I am to still be part of the Boston SPIN after all these years. Being one of the co-founders, I remember all those early meetings where we slowly but surely put the Boston SPIN organization together! These meetings started in September of 1992 and we held the

first formal Boston SPIN meeting in January 1993. I also remember when we were brainstorming about starting up the Newsletter in 1995 and someone suggested that I write a column on Software Process Improvement. As we threw around some ideas, I thought we could use a column to answer some of the questions people had on what to do when and why. We also tossed around some ideas for the name of the column and decided that "Dear SPIN Doctor" seemed very appropriate. And so it began. We covered topics from SQA evolution, ROI from Software Process Improvement, to SEPGs. We had Mark Paulk, Watts Humphrey, and other experts answer questions. Little did I know when I started the column that I would still be here writing the column 10 years later. Keep those cards, letters and questions coming and maybe, just maybe, I will be lucky enough to have the privilege to continue writing for another 10 years.



HAPPY 10th Boston SPIN! And many happy returns!

This column is for you; let's make a difference! Send your comments and questions to "Dear SPIN Doctor" at brodman@LOGOS-Intl.com. Sign them or use a "pen-name" – I respect your confidentiality.

"The SPIN Doctor"

Through the Years...

Boston SPIN Programs

The following is a sampling of the programs that the Boston SPIN has offered to their membership through the years!!

1992 –1993 Program - *The Birth of the Boston SPIN*

- 1/19/93 The Superior Software Organization - Dr. Bill Curtis, SEI
- 2/16/93 Panel: SPI Experiences in Area Companies - Ray Dion, Raytheon; Jim Dunleavy, Bull; Tony Scotto, GenRad
- 3/16/93 Model-based Process Assessments - Dr. Clement McGowan, Mitre
- 4/20/93 Panel: Software Process Improvement Experiences in Area Companies - Connie Ahara, GTE; Barbara Purchia, Applicon; Jack Ward, HP
- 5/18/93 Panel: Software Process Assessment Experiences - Ron Radice, Bull, Joe Puffer, Arthur D. Little
- 6/15/93 Panel: DoD Software Capability Evaluation Experiences - Joe Farinello, ESC, Hanscom AFB; Mario Olson, Naval Command, Control and Ocean Surveillance Center; Beth Springsteen, IDA; Paul Byrnes, SEI

1993 –1994 Program

- 09/21/93 Highlighting the Changes Between Capability Maturity Model Versions 1.0 and 1.1 (CMM V1.0 and V1.1) - Mark Paulk, SEI
- 10/19/93 Panel: Software Process Improvement Experiences in Area Companies - Ray Dion, Raytheon, Sudbury; Jim Dunleavy, Bull Information Systems; Tony Scotto, GenRad

- 11/16/93 Software Metrics, John Harding
- 12/21/93 Town Meeting
- 01/18/94 CM/CMM, The Configuration Management Process and the Capability Maturity Model - H. Ronald Berlack, Configuration Management International
- 02/15/94 The Project as a System - John Nevison, Duncan Nevison
- 03/1/94 A Discipline for Software Engineering - The Personal Software Process (PSP) - Watts Humphrey, SEI
- 04/19/94 Panel: ISO 9001 Certification as Part of an Integrated Software Process Improvement Program - John Wolsh, Bull Worldwide Information Systems; Nancy Araway, Data General; John Sax, Xylogics
- 05/17/94 Panel: Software Development with Metrics - Roy Swonger, DEC; Jan Griska, Motorola Codex; John Dreyer, Intermetrics
- 06/21/94 The SEI's CMM-based Appraisal (CBA) Project - Paul Byrnes, SEI

1994 –1995 Program

- 09/20/94 The Path to Software Excellence: Becoming “Best in Class” - Capers Jones, Software Productivity Research, Inc.
- 10/18/94 Risk Management: Limitations of the Rearview Mirror - Clyde Chittister, SEI
- 11/15/94 Panel: Real World Process Improvement for Small Organizations - Jack Arabian, consultant; John Nemezczy, consultant; Natalie Lisoski, Telco; Johanna Rothman, consultant
- 12/20/94 Town Meeting
- 01/15/95 Building Quality into Object-Oriented Applications Harvey Reed, Marcam Corporation
- 02/21/95 Internal Auditing for Measuring ISO and SEI Compliance - Richard Desjardins
- 03/21/95 An Introduction to the People CMM (P-CMM) - Bill Hefley, SEI
- 04/18/95 Process Improvement + Metrics = Performance Improvement - Dr. Howard A. Rubin
- 05/16/95 The Importance of Culture in Implementing the CMM - Stu Jeans, Lockheed Sanders
- 06/20/95 Air Force Software Process Improvement Program Michael Reed – Scott AFB, IL

1995 –1996 Program

- 09/19/95 The Learning Organization Paul Brenner, Arthur D. Little
- 10/17/95 Panel: How To Get Your Manager To Buy Into SPI Moderator: Dale Emery, consultant; John Howland, EMC; Neal Davies, DEC
- 11/14/95 The Software Acquisition Capability Maturity Model Jack Ferguson, SEI
- 12/19/95 Real Process Improvement: Benefit and Risk Tim Lister
- 01/16/96 Cleanroom Software Engineering - Phil Hausler, IBM
- 02/20/96 Panel: Software Inspections Moderator: Don O'Neill, consultant; Jean MacLeod, HP; Steve Bramley, Motorola; Peter Harris, Sybase

- 03/19/96 Managing Expectations: Working With People Who Want More, Better, Faster, Sooner, NOW! - Naomi Karten
- 04/16/96 Panel: Welcome to the Next Level” – Approaches to Achieving Higher SEI Capability Maturity - Joe Puffer, Arthur D Little; Stan Ostrowski, Dynamics Research Corp.; Kevin Porter, Computing Devices International
- 05/21/96 Reinventing Communications: Using Visual Language for Planning, Problem Solving, and Reengineering - Larry Raymond, Lotus
- 06/18/96 Managing Resistance to Software Process Improvement - Dr. Chuck Myers, SEI

1996 –1997 Program

- 09/17/96 Good Enough Quality: Imperfectionism for Perfectionists - James Bach
- 10/15/96 Real Process Improvement: Benefit and Risk (Is Process Improvement Really Worth It?) - Tim Lister, Atlantic Systems Guild
- 11/19/96 Controlling Software Development - Michael Mah, QSM Associates
- 12/17/96 5-Minute Madness
- 01/15/97 Panel: Achieving Higher Maturity Practices - Albert Soule, Arthur D. Little; Stu Jeans, Sanders; Bob Spillane, IBM; Gary Wolf, Raytheon
- 2/20/97 Panel: Experiences with Software Process Improvement and Resistance, Joint ASQ - Johanna Rothman; Barbara Purchia, Kronos, Dale Emery
- 3/25/97 What If Your Life Depended on Software? - Watts Humphrey, SEI
- 4/15/97 Panel: Project Management Tools – Helping People Do Their Jobs - Jack Nevison, Duncan-Nevison; Elin Evans, Project Solutions, Inc.; Margaret Hanemann, Island Way Corporation
- 5/20/97 Achieving Process Maturity in a Small Organization and on Small Projects - Judi Brodman and Donna Johnson, LOGOS International, Inc.
- 6/17/97 Practical Software Measurement: Measuring for Process Management and Improvement - Anita Carleton, SEI

1997–1998 Program

- 9/16/97 A Simple Approach to Achieving CMM Level 2 - James P. Driscoll and Unmesh Gundewar, EDS
- 10/21/97 You CAN Test to Achieve Quality!- Michael Taylor, PAREXEL Communications
- 11/18/97 Metrics for the Intrapreneurial Software Organization - Maxine Crowther, Cadence
- 12/16/97 QFD and Software Development: So, what's the problem? - Lou Cohen, Consultant
- 1/20/98 Audience Participation: Deep Dark Secrets from the Software Process Improvement World
- 2/19/98 Joint ASQ The Year 2000 Software Problem: Quantifying The Costs And Assessing The Consequences (?) - Capers Jones
- 3/17/98 Bridging the Gap with Software Process - Lawrence Gerard – Rational Software; Neil White – aimware
- 4/21/98 Standards for Component-Based Development - Dr. Carma McClure – Extended Intelligence Inc.

- 5/19/98 Using Inspection Data - John T. Harding, Software Technology Transition
- 6/16/98 Ten Things Every Project Manager Should Know About The Project Management Institute's Project Management Body Of Knowledge Guide - William Duncan, Project Management Partners

1998 –1999 Program

- 9/15/98 Riding the Web Tide (A Practical Approach to Institutionalizing Project Management) - Unmesh Gundewar and Terie Rixman, EDS
- 10/20/98 Retrospective Code Inspection for System Performance or "How did that get in there?" - Benson Margulies
- 11/17/98 A Better Alternative to the KPA by KPA Approach to Process Definition and Process Rollout - Carrie Buchman- Pragma Systems
- 12/15/98 Product Development and Process Roundtables: Peer Reviews, Challenges in Testing, Requirements Management, Metrics, Process Improvement
- 1/19/99 Optimum Software Testing - Bill Silver
- 2/25/99 Joint ASQ, Good Enough Testing: Heuristic Models for Assessing Your Test Process - James Bach
- 3/16/99 A Tailorable Mini-Assessment Model - Carol Pilch, GTE
- 4/20/99 A Bad Law for Bad Software – and What We Can Do About It - Cem Kaner
- 5/19/99 Performance Measurement for Software Organizations - Dave Zubrow, SEI
- 6/15/99 Why Good Requirements Are Key to Successful Projects - Kimberly Roberts, Quality Systems & Software, Inc. (QSS)

1999 –2000 Program

- 9/21/99 Are Five Levels Enough - Tom DeMarco
- 10/19/99 Software Projects in Crisis: Dealing with Imposed Deadlines - Michael Mah, QSM Associates
- 11/16/99 Good Enough Testing - James Bach
- 12/21/99 Round Table: Product Development and Process
- 1/18/00 An Introduction to Requirements Size Units - John Abbott
- 2/15/00 Using Quality to Drive Project Lifecycles - Johanna Rothman, Rothman Consulting Group, Inc.
- 3/16/00 Ensuring Clients Achieve Superior Value in the Digital Economy - Jim Driscoll, EDS
- 4/18/00 Panel: Process Maturity, Things that Work - Donna Johnson, LOGOS International; Barry Foster, MatrixOne Inc.; Carol Pilch, General Dynamics; Dolores McCarthy, Computer Sciences Corporation
- 5/16/00 Dynamic Business Planning - John Satta, Quality Systems & Software
- 6/19/00 Yellow Sticky Method of Project Scheduling - Steve Rakitin

2000 –2001 Program

- 9/19/00 The Future through the Past: Using Post Mortem for Process Improvement - Linda McInnis, Noble Associates, Inc.

- 10/17/00 A Requirements-Based Approach to Delivering E-Business and Enterprise Applications - Scott Jeffries - TBI
- 11/21/00 Time to Market Process Improvement – A Case Study - Alex Marchicelli, NewLane, LLC
- 12/19/00 Software Benchmarking – What Works and What Doesn't - Capers Jones

People and Faces

We unfortunately didn't start taking photographs until recently after some of us had digital cameras. Here are just a few of the people and faces that have contributed to the Boston SPIN throughout the years....



Quotes

“Finally, I am aware of many (most) of the local, quality-oriented professional organizations. I attend their meetings and listen to their speakers/topics. I find SPIN to be the most dynamic and engaging. Your team of volunteers produce a great product.” - Ross Seider, Speaker

“With this edition, I’m concluding my tenure as Editor of *In-the-SPIN*. I’d especially like to thank all the folks that took the time to contribute to this newsletter during my editorship. It’s because of all of the contributors that I’ve received a lot of positive feedback on *In-the-SPIN*. Please continue to support the newsletter with your contributions as Judi Brodman and Sheila Lynch take the reins as co-editors.” – Carol Pilch, previous editor of *In-the-SPIN* Newsletter

ON STANDARDS

On the first day, the Creator said, “Let there be standards,” and it was good.

On the second day, the world said, “Let there be experts and consultants,” and it was good.

On the third day, confusion reigned, the people said, “I like my old way better,” and it grew dark.

On the fourth day, warring factions drew sides, fights broke out, and blood ran in the streets.

On the fifth day, the wounded agreed to talk about differences, and a measure of quiet set in.

On the sixth day, reconciliation was achieved, and a change for the better took place.

On the seventh day, light dawned and peace reigned.

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SPIN Information

The Boston SPIN is a forum for the free and open exchange of software process improvement experiences and ideas. Meetings are usually held on third Tuesdays, September - June. Boston SPIN welcomes volunteers and sponsors. There is no charge to attend the meetings. Additional information about the Boston SPIN can be found at our Web home page: <http://www.boston-spin.org>.

For more information about our programs and events contact John Brtis, Program Chair, jbrtis@mitre.org.

Cancellations (including weather)

Starting at 3pm, we'll notify you via email to the SPIN distribution list, we'll post the notice on the SPIN web page, and we'll send the cancellation announcement to Channel 7 TV.

SPIN Meeting Location

Boston SPIN meetings are held at The MITRE Corporation in Bedford.

Please be aware that MITRE has advised us that, due to increased security concerns, you will need a Picture ID for admission to the SPIN meetings. We encourage you to leave all carrying bags, backpacks, and briefcases behind (i.e., in your

car). Otherwise, you should be prepared to have these opened and inspected upon arrival.

MITRE’s campus is located at 202 Burlington Road (Route 62), Bedford. Directions can be found on our Web site: <http://www.boston-spin.org> or on The MITRE Corporation Web site: <http://www.mitre.org>.

Sponsors

The following organizations/individuals support the Boston SPIN:

- The MITRE Corporation:
<http://www.mitre.org/>
- Microsoft Technology Center (MTC):
<http://www.microsoft.com/mtc/>
- ChacoCanyon Consulting:
<http://www.chacocanyon.com/>

If your organization is interested in sponsoring Boston SPIN, please contact SPIN Steering Committee member Rick Brenner at rbrenner@chacocanyon.com or ask any Steering Committee member for a sponsorship brochure.

Email Lists

To receive Boston SPIN specific notices, send an email to:

Jim Withall, Boston SPIN membership chair, at withall@rcn.com.

To receive Boston SPIN-Plus specific notices, send an email to: boston-spin-plus@alum.wpi.edu

with the word 'subscribe' in the body of the message. It must be in the body and not in the subject. The message must be plain text and not HTML.

Newsletter Call for Articles

The *In-the-SPIN Newsletter* is always in need of new and interesting articles dealing with process improvement, software development methodologies, project management and other related subjects that may be of interest to our readership. Please send general correspondence or articles that you would like to have considered for publication to:

- Judi Brodman, Editor of *In-the-SPIN* at brodman@logos-intl.com

Back issues of the *In-the-SPIN* Newsletter can be found on the Boston SPIN Web site: <http://www.boston-spin.org/>.

SEPG 95 Committee Members - Names

How many could you identify?

Back row starting left: Charlie Ryan, John Howland, Robin Goldsmith, Ken Oasis, Gene Bounds (SEI), Harry Koch, Johanna Rothman, Joe Farinello, Bernadette Leahy

Front row starting left: Anne Weaver, Barbara Purchia, Suel-len Ingalls, Donna Johnson, Annette Lanigan, Judi Brodman

Are we correct??