



## President's Message

by Pat Leach



For those of you who tuned in to the Town Hall meeting, some of this may be a bit repetitive, so I apologize in advance for that.

First, we are at an exciting time in the SDP's brief history. We are in transition from a group of people who do similar things for a living and enjoy sharing ideas to a true professional society. This comes with challenges. We are still "sub-critical-mass" in the sense of being a self-sustaining organization – we rely on income from sponsors and from DAAG and other events to fund our annual budget, as opposed to funding them through member dues alone. The Catch-22 is that the kinds of initiatives that will help us to grow require resources beyond what we have, but obtaining those resources will probably require us to be bigger than we currently are. What this means is that your volunteer work on behalf of the society has never been more important. Volunteer activity is probably the only way that we will "cross the chasm" and become a full-fledged professional society. On behalf of the Board of Directors, many thanks to all of you who help SDP in these ways.

Second, a hot topic these days is decision-making during a pandemic (i.e., COVID-19) – including what to do about our own DAAG conference, currently scheduled for March 31 – April 3 in Houston. At the time of the writing of this column, we are considering several possible paths forward, and we're waiting on one more piece of information to make a decision. As soon as we do, we will let everyone know what course of action we have decided on. We appreciate everyone's patience on this – it's a difficult time for anyone trying to organize a meeting, or even just planning to travel somewhere.

*Continued on page 2*

### In this issue

President's message	1	Chapter news	7
Upcoming events	3	Sponsor message	8
Member spotlight	4	Brain teaser	9
Council focus	5	Useful links	9

*President's Message, continued from page 1*

On that subject, I've heard some interesting comments from fellow decision professionals regarding the recent wave of cancellations of conferences and events due to the corona virus. Most of those comments could be paraphrased as, "Everyone is overreacting. The data regarding infection rates and mortality rates simply do not warrant the global panic that is taking place. It's irrational."

Maybe. I would urge my colleagues to remember Katherine Rosback's mantra when someone does something that appears irrational: "Why does that make perfect sense?" Katherine wasn't talking about pandemics or any other kind of emergency; she was just referring to the instance when a competitor or a partner or any third party does something that, on the surface, appears to make no sense at all. The point of the mantra is to remind ourselves that while the third party's action may make no sense to us, it almost certainly makes perfect sense to them. If we're smart, we will try to figure out how it makes sense to them. Doing so will yield significant insights into how that competitor/partner/third party thinks and what matters to them. That's enormously valuable. By contrast, writing them off as irrational yields no insights at all.

When it comes to the current reactions to COVID-19 – and specifically the travel bans some companies have put in place – it helps to look at it through a legal lens. For many companies, the potential liability associated with COVID-19 is a large enough risk that it should be avoided if at all possible. Hence, no unnecessary corporate travel. For some individuals, the risks associated with a respiratory infection are greater than they are for a typical, healthy adult. Hence, cancellation of trips. These decisions aren't irrational to the people making them. In fact, they make perfect sense.

If someone's actions appear irrational to us, we are probably viewing them through the wrong frame. Rather than dismissing them as unreasoning, we should shift our frame.

Pat Leach  
SDP President

## Congratulations to SDP's Newest Fellow, Warwick Blyth



Congratulations go to Warwick Blyth upon his recent certification as a Fellow in the Society of Decision Professionals. Warwick served as a senior consultant for Strategic Decisions Group for many years. In 2019, he joined CNOOC International in London, where, as a Decision Analysis and Strategy Advisor, he facilitates DA/DQ processes for many significant decisions and also works to develop organizational DA and DQ capability across the company through a range of training and coaching activities.

### Upcoming Events



**SOCIETY OF DECISION  
PROFESSIONALS**  
Clarity & Insight for Decisive Action

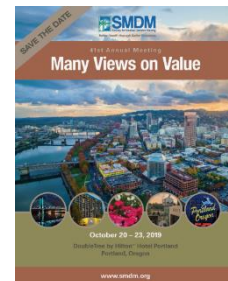
#### DAAG 2020

March 31 – April 3, 2020

The Westin Oak

5011 W

**LATE NEWS**  
DAAG 2020 has been  
postponed. New date  
coming soon.



#### Save the Date!

[SMDM 42nd Annual Meeting:](#)

Chicago, IL

October 18 - 21, 2020

The meeting theme is *Relationships in  
Medical Decision Making*

Meeting co-chairs: David Meltzer, MD, PhD and  
Alan Schwartz, PhD

Do you know of upcoming professional events that might be of interest to other SDP members?  
If so, please email the SDP newsletter at [newsletter@decisionprofessionals.com](mailto:newsletter@decisionprofessionals.com)





## Spotlight on SDP Member Jesse Bearce

*In every issue of this newsletter, we turn the spotlight on a randomly-selected member of the SDP to learn more about that member's life as a decision professional.*

*The editors*



SDP member Jesse Bearce is a Decision Scientist within the server group of Intel Corporation. In that role, he works with a team to model the dynamics of the complex market ecosystem facing the group, involving such disruptive forces as hyperscale cloud, artificial intelligence, heterogeneous architectures, and self-built silicon. With the anticipation of future marketplace changes gained from this modeling, the team can effectively facilitate framing and alternative generation workshops within the group and develop new strategies to better support customers.

Jesse joined Intel in 2001 with a bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering from DeVry University and began working as an R&D engineer. While in that position, he earned an MBA from Indiana University via a distance-learning program. He then transitioned from engineering to finance within Intel and rotated through several parts of the company, winding up in the Corporate Strategy Office, where he was responsible for Enterprise Risk Management. He was introduced to Decision Quality via a course given by SDG within Intel and, realizing that the DQ approach was engineering rigor applied to business decisions, sought to learn more. Along with (past SDP President) Jim Driscoll, Jesse was a founding member of the Intel Decision Quality Office, where he worked for several years. He says that "working with that team on some of the most challenging strategic topics was my career highlight, and some of the wins remain top highlights today." About four years ago, he moved into his current position, where he has been busy maintaining the marketplace model and helping develop new strategies.

He has experienced numerous satisfactions in his role as a decision professional within Intel. One came early in his career when he was working with the company's chief legal counsel exploring investments in technology IP portfolios. On the Friday afternoon before a Memorial Day weekend, Jesse received a telephone call saying a company that was suing Intel for patent infringement had just sent an out-of-court settlement offer. The case was due to be heard in court the following Tuesday, so Intel had just a few days to decide whether or not to accept the out-of-court settlement. Jesse worked with a team over the holiday weekend to reach a clear recommendation to refuse the offer. The case went to court, where Intel was found not guilty – good decision and good outcome!

More recently, Jesse has found great satisfaction in successfully applying decision science to the cloud ecosystem and internal organizational dynamics, resulting in positive impacts on Intel and its customers. He was able to introduce a new methodology that has provided a clear picture of the cloud dynamics, influenced investment, and reduced future supply constraint risk.

The biggest challenge that he has faced in his role as a decision professional is overcoming resistance within parts of the Intel organization to accepting the DQ approach, which, to some people, can be seen as challenging the status quo and the leadership narrative. Jesse is working to evolve his approach as he interacts with executive ranks and on cross-group efforts.

As a member of SDP, Jesse finds value in knowing that there is a community of world-class decision professionals working through common challenges. Membership helps him establish credibility when starting a new project with busy executives. Tapping into the knowledge of the membership and learning from webcasts and best practices has also been an ongoing value for him. And he is now finding ways to give back to the SDP community. He recently led an effort commissioned by President Pat Leach to identify ways to enhance the value of membership in the Society. And he will be presenting a case study at the upcoming DAAG.



## SDP Council Focus

### Chapters & Outreach Council:

Within our council, existing chapters representatives meet every few months to discuss what's new, what's working and what challenges they are facing. As each chapter is different, a variety of approaches and efforts are being tried to connect practitioners, create a local presence and grow the chapter. Here are some highlights.

SDP's sixth local chapter became official in October when the inaugural Vancouver chapter formed. A group of local decision practitioners had already been meeting informally for a year, inspired by hosting the DAAG 2018 conference in Vancouver. The chapter includes representation from diverse sectors, including utilities, energy, local government, natural resources, insurance and software. If you will be passing through Vancouver, please feel free to reach out to Basil Stumborg ([Basil.Stumborg@bchydro.com](mailto:Basil.Stumborg@bchydro.com)) or another member of the chapter executive, as guest speakers and participants are welcomed.



*Basil Stumborg (President), Rob Lazenby (Vice-President), Lyle Walker (Secretary) signing the Vancouver chapter bylaws*

In April 2019, the Houston chapter hosted its first Decision Quality Energy Summit, which attracted more than 140 attendees and raised \$20,000 for SDP. This full-day event had a theme of “Thriving in Uncertain Times” and was aimed at sharing the know-how and application of DQ on a variety of projects. It started with an executive roundtable on “What does Decision Quality mean to senior management”, followed by three themed sessions with multiple industry presenters and a well-attended networking event. Sponsors helped cover costs and chapter volunteers ran the event. It was such a success that planning is underway for a similar event in fall 2020. If you are looking for more information on what's involved in organizing a local event such as this, please reach out to Jeremy Walker.

If you are interested in exploring the possibility of starting a new local chapter, please contact Jeremy Walker ([jeremywalker@decisionframeworks.com](mailto:jeremywalker@decisionframeworks.com)) or Andrew Thrift ([andrew.thrift@teck.com](mailto:andrew.thrift@teck.com)). Through sharing experiences as a group of local chapter leaders, we've gained a lot of insight on what works and we're keen to help others develop their local decision practitioner community.

## SDP Council Focus (Continued)

### Knowledge Sharing Council:

The Knowledge Sharing Council has officially kicked off 5 SDP Interest Groups this quarter: Cost and Schedule Risk Analysis, Pharma, Data Science, Scenario Planning, and Finance. The Pharma Interest Group sign-up will begin by early next week.

We've had great response thus far with about 20 members signing up for each group on average. Many members have signed up for more than one group and KSC will be accommodating those requests. We will be staggering the groups to different weeks/timing each month so that members can attend as many as they'd like without worrying about any overlap each month. We believe these groups will provide the discussion, insight and energy that members have been asking for.

KSC is looking for two project managers to spend 3-5 months helping us design and launch a Fellow's Blog, which would be a vehicle for SDP members to hear from the many thought leaders of our discipline on key topics shaping our discipline. We have done quite a bit of groundwork already but are looking for volunteers to help bring this to life for the KSC -- if interested please contact Hilda and/or Sheldon Bernard at [sberna.genx@gmail.com](mailto:sberna.genx@gmail.com)

### Program Council:

New members on the Program Council opened up our roster and brought new expertise to SDP members through our Learning Exchange webinar series. We won't recap all the talks but don't forget you can find the slide decks at [SDP Webinars](#)

Prof. Gilberto Montibeller, Professor of Management Science at Loughborough University and Head of Management Science and Operations Group, kicked off the season with a talk on bias in decision-making. This well-received webinar prompted us to add a new benefit to SDP members by sponsoring an interactive roundtable session that allowed participants to delve deeper into the subject. We've also benefited from his connections to European experts with talks by *Prof. Etienne Rouwette*, on empirical research methods and group decision support methods in January, and coming up in June, Prof. Alberto Franco will share his expertise on problem framing and structuring.

In the US, two other academics presented talks on the importance of using geographic information and data visualization in decision analysis - Prof. Jay Simon at American University and Prof. Michael Gerst at the University of Maryland, respectively. The popularity of these topics is making us think about longer workshops for DAAG 2021.

Our webinars tend to be on the third Wednesday of the month, though that can vary, so the best bet is to check the SDP website. Do you have a presentation that would work for an SDP webinar? If so, contact the Program Council Chairperson, Carol Liffman at [carol@liffmanadvisoryllc.com](mailto:carol@liffmanadvisoryllc.com).



## SDP Council Focus (Continued)

### Membership & Communication Council:

As 2020 is well underway, the Membership and Communication Council has its sights on two objectives. The first is identifying and deploying a new method for distributing and maintaining a membership directory that will be integrated to facilitate networking among the membership. The second is exploring better utilization of social media to improve our communication reach.

Last but certainly not least, The Membership and Communication Council is seeking a motivated individual to serve as co-editor of the SDP Newsletter. The time commitment varies but rarely exceeds eight hours per quarterly issue. Please contact us at [newsletter@decisionprofessionals.com](mailto:newsletter@decisionprofessionals.com) for more information.

## Chapter News

### Houston Chapter:

The SDP Houston Chapter is excited to start the 2020 year with great momentum. The chapter has had 2 successful meetings with short talks that brought over 50 participants to each meeting. These meetings offer participants access either by attending in person or via webinar.

**Jan 9, 2020**

**Dr. Paul Papayoanou, Founder & Managing Director of Dragonfly**

**TALK TITLE: "Extending Decision Analysis with Game Theory"**

**ABSTRACT** - In making build-buy-ally decisions, companies often need to tackle a range of difficult competitive-cooperative dilemmas. To approach these decisions adequately and resolve the dilemmas, traditional decision analysis needs to be extended with game theory. This webinar shows how and why Strategic Gaming—a practical game theory approach that employs a decision analysis workflow of framing, analysis, and dialogue—takes DA to the next level and makes it applicable to a wider range of strategic decisions.

**Feb 6, 2020**

**Jeremy Walker, Vice President of Decision Frameworks**

**TALK TITLE: "Late Life Asset Decisions: Love, Death and Rock and Roll"**

**ABSTRACT** - Often, we are faced with difficult choices when we are dealing with late life and overly mature assets. With the reframes like an old classic song playing in our heads, our thoughts can become clouded based upon the memories of how things used to be. The debates on the future of these assets can be heated as they oftentimes involve important and vested personnel with deep experience and strong views. These assets compete with other opportunities in the portfolio for people, resources and capital.

The chapter's next meeting is on Thursday, March 5<sup>th</sup> and features a short talk by Brian Hagen, "Problem, Risk, and Opportunity (PRO) Enterprise Management". The Houston Chapter Executive Committee will also meet on March 5<sup>th</sup> to begin organizing the Planning Committee for the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual **HOUSTON SDP DQ SUMMIT** that is scheduled for October 30, 2020. Anyone wishing to participate in the planning, give a talk or have questions should contact the Chapter's President, Chris Travis at email:

[houstonchapter@decisionprofessionals.com](mailto:houstonchapter@decisionprofessionals.com)



## A Word From an SDP Sponsor

*In every issue of this newsletter, we include a message from one of the SDP sponsors, whose support contributes significantly to the on-going success of the Society.*



K Carpenter Associates (KCA) is one of the more recent sponsors to the Society of Decision Professionals. However, members of our group have been involved in Decision Analysis since the 90s. Our Fellow, David Skinner, is the author of the foundational book *Introduction to Decision Analysis*, which is found on bookshelves in many companies, across several industries. Kevin Carpenter, our founder and CEO has been practicing DA since 2002 when he joined Decision Strategies.

Founded in 2009 and incorporated in 2011, KCA's approach to Decision Analysis focuses on the practical application of DA principles to business opportunities large and small. We have helped clients of all sizes, from internet and small business startups, to large multinational pharmaceutical and energy companies.

Each engagement is an opportunity to recruit the client to the ways and benefits of using DA in their strategic and business project decisions, and we have instructed thousands of students through our Introduction to DA 2 and 3-day classes.

We are especially proud of our innovative modeling techniques, from using time slicing to distribute the uncertainties of event duration, and using time displacement to compensate for production deferral, to employing an adjusted range assessment process to assess 10/50/90 ranges from SMEs that are resistive to the standard approach.

KCA also goes beyond DA to provide clients support in Project Management, Business Analysis, Change Management, Process Reengineering, HAZOPs, IT development, and general business support – doing whatever it takes to help our clients succeed.

We continue to grow and may have a fit for your particular skillset. Whether new to the world of DA or a veteran looking for supplemental work, if interested in seeing how KCA can fit your development plans, please reach out to us at [INFO@KCA-us.com](mailto:INFO@KCA-us.com)



# Brain Teaser

## Congratulations to Fred Krumm

The answer to the brain teaser posed in the December issue is that you can start at a point  $5 + 2.5/\pi$  miles from the South Pole, walk 5 miles south, 5 miles west, and 5 miles north and be exactly where you started. A full explanation of the answer can be found by [clicking here](#). Fred Krumm was the first to submit a correct answer.

## THE MARCH BRAIN TEASER

*Instructions: You can win “bragging rights” by being the first to submit the correct answer of this brain teaser to the newsletter editors ([SDP Newsletter: Brain Teaser](#)). We will announce the winner in the next issue.*

## Three Envelopes

You are presented with three sealed envelopes containing different amounts of money. You may claim one of the envelopes via the following procedure: You select an envelope and open it to observe the amount of money it contains. You may then claim that envelope or return it and select one of the other two envelopes, observing the amount of money it contains. You then claim either that envelope or the third envelope. What is the strategy that maximizes the probability that you will claim the envelope containing the greatest amount of money? And what is that probability?

## Useful Links

The SDP Board has posted the Society’s Bylaws and Policy and Procedure Manual, which can be found at: <http://www.decisionprofessionals.com/about/governance>

A listing of courses in decision analysis available to SDP members is at: <http://www.decisionprofessionals.com/courses/training-program>

## Join Us in Producing the SDP Newsletter

We, the editors, are actively looking for other SDP members to join us in producing this newsletter. If you are interested, please contact us. [Click here](#) to email the editors.

Emilia Silebi and Steve Tani  
SDP Newsletter Editors

