

From the Toolbox by Dave Taylor, C.P.M.

June 2006—Things are Blooming and the Scenery is Different

May's dinner presentation with Dr. Dean Krauskopf of MSU's Wayne County Extension Service, was a wonderful departure from our normal programs. Gift certificates were provided by Jackson greenhouses The Hobbit Place, Beck's and Christian's in Lansing. An unexpected tip from Dean—for those that have trouble with deer and animals eating their plants and gardens, install a motion detector on a water sprinkler—scares away the animals & waters the garden briefly!

I spoke about collaboration previously with our suppliers. This coming week, three of our company team will be visiting two of our top 20 suppliers to discuss how to mutually grow our businesses.

I also mentioned Microsoft and discussion I had with their "Collaboration Specialist". This week I have heard several ads on the radio for new Microsoft Software for Supply Chain Management—HMMMM! What does it mean when Bill Gates usually announces something new? His turn to jump on the bandwagon? Not likely, he usually is attaching it to his tractor so everyone else in the market jumps on HIS bandwagon.

Think again, might it be that Bill is visionary enough to see this is a new unexplored frontier? What do you think we have been saying for many years in ISM? Supply Chain Management is at the pulse-beat of most organizations. We are integrated or tied so closely with the bottom line and the finances of the company, that we can affect and implement sweeping changes. Often neglected, seldom praised, we go about our daily duties, doing the best we can or so we think. Take heed, if Microsoft is jumping in, sweeping changes unlike anything we have seen previously will soon be swooping down on us. Several months ago I spoke of Tsunamis and staying ahead of the market and our competitors. Could this be the first one coming in from the sea?

Maybe Mr. Gates is intending to make Supply Chain Management so common that it will become a household word like PC or MS Office or Outlook. If that is the case, the bar has just been raised and the gauntlet laid down. What are we going to do to keep our positions, maintain our stature and our positions in the corporate frameworks, when Bill G. and others are going to provide us tools they will promise will make it possible for anyone to do our job better? Web E-trading has become very commonplace with so many thinking they can do as well from their living room or home den, as a stock broker or trained financial advisor in the market-- previously did for their portfolio.

I guess I sound the trumpet-- to implore all of us to take stock of what we are doing in our careers to better our skills and make us a more valuable asset within our work organizations. **Why do I belong to the ISM community and fellowship of peers starting with NAPM-Central Michigan?** Here are just a few this month:

#1 *For my professional survival*—keeping me focused on the changes and challenges of my profession.

#2 *To network with brilliant and gifted professionals*, academics and peers for my growth and information.

#3. *I am challenged by the youthfulness, idealism and energy of our local group of students from MSU, Univ. of Mi. and Spring Arbor University.*

#4 *To Improve My skills and knowledge or my profession*, which directly influences my company, and their ability to survive and perform competitively and meet our customer needs.

Thank you all, for your support this past year as your President. I look forward to this next year and my changing duties while supporting our new President, Mike Butchart. Have a wonderful summer all. dt