Dave Fisher

Dave Fisher is a retired geologist whose career began in mineral exploration and then oil exploration in Canada. The latter part of his employment was in data management and in that role he was a director of the PPDM Association from 1993 to 1999. He is proud to be an honorary member of PPDM.

It is an understatement to say that Dave has remained active with PPDM as both a volunteer and contractor specializing in well information issues. Dave's involvement and support of the PPDM Association has, quite simply, never stopped! In his role during the infancy of the Association and the Board of Directors, Dave was instrumental in designing the governance processes used by PPDM. Many of these are used today to ensure the stability and sustainability of PPDM.

Dave has been an integral part of more work groups than we have time to name.
From "What is a Well?" to the Global Well Identification Best Practices, Canadian and US Well Identification standards, the data model and more, Dave has always been ready to lend a hand wherever it is needed. In PPDM committees and work groups, Dave is advisor, expert, cheerleader, editor and all round supporter of all the staff at PPDM.

Dave spends a lot of time at the PPDM office, where he helps with whatever needs doing at PPDM. Nothing is too difficult or simple for Dave to tackle with the energy, enthusiasm and determination that true grit brings to the table. He has mentored PPDM's project managers in many aspects of the petroleum life cycle, and helped craft many of the amazing technical documents we all use today.

Dave does not limit his involvement to office time. Early on a Sunday morning, it is not at all uncommon for Trudy or Ingrid to receive a lengthy, detailed, brilliantly crafted, insightful email about a particular topic under investigation. Dave keeps what PPDM is doing in mind no matter where he is, even when he is on vacation – and Dave goes on some pretty amazing vacations! Dave once dialed into PPDM conference calls while visiting antiquities in Turkey, including the Library of Celsius! He and his wife had to be sure they would be done that on time, so he would not miss that call!

For several years, Dave has been the hands on driving force behind the creation of the PPDM Data Rules Library. Through Dave's patient editing and attention to detail, the library now has over 3,000 rules, and continues to grow every month. (Anyone who has some rules should really talk to Dave about them!).

Dave has also been instrumental in the development of the certification program. Never in the limelight, Dave has worked tirelessly to ensure that the contents of the invigilation process are authentic and practical. He has contributed to the development of many of the 35 training classes offered by PPDM today.

As a champion, Dave encourages others in our industry to get involved in what we are doing, and represents the embodiment of what is great about PPDM.

Pat Rhynes

Pat started work in the Oil industry in 1973 and has nearly 40 years of experience. He started in production accounting for a major company and soon switched to the development of software for the petroleum industry. After five years he went to work for a smaller software firm and has focused on development of software based upon working with the end-users. Pat has a Bachelor of Science in Math with Computer Science Minor from the University of Calgary and was one of the founders of Applied Terravision Systems, with a focus on software development and implementations. Just prior to (one of) Pat's retirement, he worked on design elements for a PPDM master data management software product.

Pat has experience in the development, implementation and integration of software for most of the disciplines of oil and gas and has done business in 28 countries. In 1991, Pat was part of the committee that designed the first version of the PPDM Data Model, as member of the Data Model Sub-Committee. He was, therefore, one of the initial data modelers of the PPDM Data Model.

Since then, Pat has been involved, directly or indirectly, in every release of the PPDM Data Model. His expertise in all aspects of the petroleum life cycle is unparalleled, and has given him an excellent vantage point from which to collaborate on the design and implementation of the data model all across the globe.

More recently, Pat has been focussed on the importance of understanding the business processes critical to petroleum life cycles. Pat is a passionate advocate of the value that this knowledge can bring to industry and data management processes, from strategic planning and governance to tactical implementations. He has worked extensively to identify and document all of the processes, sub processes and activities in all business domains throughout the life cycle.

Pat has built and donated much of this material to the PPDM Association for inclusion in PPDM's training programs. Several of the training programs delivered by the PPDM Association were authored, in whole or in part, by Pat Rhynes. Pat would like to take this opportunity to encourage everyone to take the classes on Primary Business Processes of the Petroleum Life Cycle.

Pat is now retired but seems to have difficulty saying NO to Trudy, PPDM and some former colleagues. Even though Pat is "officially retired", Pat continues to support PPDM by teaching many PPDM classes to member companies around the world.

Without Pat, the data model and the training program would not be what they are today, and we want to thank Pat for his enthusiasm, dedication, coaching and support to PPDM.

Pat spends his spare time fishing offshore on the west coast on his own boat. Pat would be glad to talk to you about the therapeutic benefits of this pastime.

Chuck Smith

Chuck has been part of the oil industry for decades, and has expertise in data, data management and Geographic Information Systems. Chuck's consulting company, Petro-Arc, provides expert consulting services to industry. Chuck is an experienced Project Manager and Information Architect with extensive experience implementing master data management solutions, emphasizing data governance and data quality management to support the E&P business life cycle and the application domain.

Chuck began his career as a systems analyst. His talent and determination propelled him into a development supervisor's role with D&S Petroleum Consulting Group. There was no stopping Chuck with his next appointment as VP with CANEX Exploration Services, a seismic geomatics company. Chuck continued to excel in his field as an independent consultant in 1995 to provide information systems consulting services to the oil and gas industry, specializing in E&P based application development and integration utilizing the PPDM data model.

Seeking a new challenge, Chuck established AnGIS Software Inc., formed to create the first ESRI based oil and gas application software suite to bridge the gap between desktop GIS and PPDM databases. AnGIS was acquired in 2000 by International Datashare Corporation, and Chuck moved into a VP role overseeing the data management and GIS product development streams.

As a long-time supporter, Chuck became involved with the PPDM Association as one of the original founding and executive committee members. He co-chaired the PPDM Seismic Modeling Committee, acted as the Spatial I Database Project Lead and presented at the ESRI PUG conference on the Spatial I project. Chuck continued to support the Association as a key contributor to the PPDM Certification Program for several years, and was instrumental to the development and release of the Certified Petroleum Data Analyst program.

Today, Chuck is working as a Data Architect on the release of PPDM 3.10. Chuck will integrate the EPSG Coordinate Reference System and the Energistics Units of Measure into the data model, thus helping to integrate and harmonize industry standards for the benefit of industry. Chuck's quiet, unassuming nature, combined with boundless enthusiasm and an excellent sense of humor, have made Chuck a wonderful asset to the PPDM Community.

The PPDM Association is fortunate to benefit from Chuck's wealth of knowledge, contagious enthusiasm and unassuming nature.

Yogi Schulz

Yogi Schulz holds a B. Comm. from the University of Calgary, and is a partner at Corvelle Consulting, a firm that specializes in project management and information technology related management consulting. Mr. Schulz has over 40 years of Information Systems experience of which over 30 have been spent as a consultant. Yogi is an unpretentious man, with a wide range of strategic skills.

Yogi works extensively in the petroleum industry to select and implement financial, production accounting, land & contracts, public data and geotechnical systems. He manages projects that arise from changes in business requirements, from the need to leverage technology opportunities and from mergers. His specialties include IT strategy and systems project management. Yogi led a project at the ERCB that developed and rolled out the Enhanced Production Audit Program (EPAP) to the Alberta oil & gas industry. This project resulted in operators achieving a higher level of assurance over the state of their compliance with measurement and report requirements.

Recently, Yogi led a project at the government of Saskatchewan which resulted in harmonization between Saskatchewan's PNG017 Measurement Requirements for Oil and Gas Operations and AER Directive 017. Collaborative successes such as this are important to the end goals of PPDM's Regulatory Data Standards Committee.

Mr. Schulz speaks regularly to industry groups, including PPDM, often using Dilbert humor to illustrate serious and insightful concepts. We want to thank Yogi for his delightfully dry sense of humor. Yogi is a prolific and eloquent author. He has written monthly columns for Microsoft.com, the Calgary Herald and Computing Canada. Currently he writes for ITWorldCanada and BOE Report. His writing focuses on project management and IT developments of interest to management.

Mr. Schulz served as a member of the Board of Directors of the PPDM Association for twenty years. He is a vocal advocate of PPDM and never hesitates to share his wisdom and knowledge to ensure that we are all achieving the best possible end result. Yogi was part of the Board of Directors when PPDM first began exploring its future as the professional society for petroleum data managers. His perspectives were instrumental in ensuring that the course the PPDM Association charted was well considered, prudent and appropriate.

Wes Baird

Wes has been on an interesting life journey. He started off at a technical school in Edmonton way back in the 1970's with a specialization in geology. After that, Wes moved on to a first job that involved mapping tar sands reserves with a computer. This led to a life-long interest in well data and doing this better, faster and more accurately. Most of Wes's career has been spent in Calgary working on E&P data, as a DBA, as a systems implementer, as an application designer, as a Thermal Heavy Oil systems architect and as a stout supporter of the PPDM. Today, Wes is Chief Product Architect at geoLOGIC Systems.
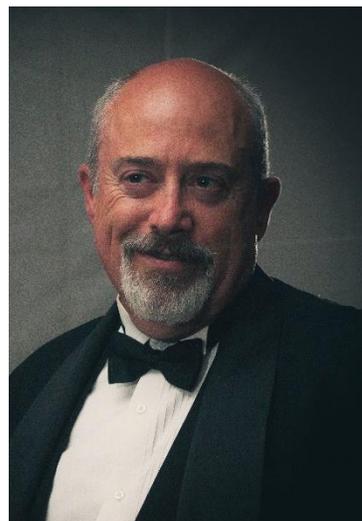
Wes has been involved with PPDM since the early nineties as a board member (off and on), a contractor, a modeling group member and where ever else he can contribute. Wes was part of the Well Test committee from 1991, during the first days of PPDM. He has been part of the modelling committee for nearly every version of PPDM that has been released, and helped shape much of the structures you see today. He has also been a member of the PPDM Board of Directors, and helped shape our future as the professional society for petroleum data management.

Today, it is his role as "unsung PPDM hero" that we celebrate most of all. Let's start with the Teapot Dome dataset. Starting about 2007, a group of Calgary based experts met to talk about a vision to create a sample dataset for members in PPDM. There were a few people in the gang – Kim Kelln gets the blame for starting it all, but along with a core team of Wes, Tim Downing, Doug Henderson and Trudy Curtis, the Teapot Dome dataset was collected and loaded into PPDM, and it remains available to members today. This was not an easy undertaking, as many of you might know. The dataset was fragmented, in many different semi or unstructured formats, and fraught with errors – just like real data! While far from perfect, the cleaned up result has been a popular resource for our members for many years.

Those who were involved with generating each version of the data model may be aware of the intractable challenges in developing, managing and extracting such a large data model from PPDM's CASE tool (which has, happily, now been retired!). It was Wes who came to Trudy's rescue time and again to develop mechanisms that made this difficult task manageable and practical. The scripts and procedures developed by Wes saved PPDM many thousands of hours of effort, and helped ensure that the data model published today was as consistent and rigorous as possible. Wes has been an integral and critical part of PPDM data model delivery for many years, and we all owe him our hanks.

Wherever Wes has gone in his career, he has advocated and implemented standards. He was instrumental in bringing PPDM to the tiny Yukon Territorial Government. He has and continues to develop standards based solutions for operators and vendor companies alike. Wes has a wonderful approach to hard work, and enlivens any meeting with stories – most of them about water skiing!

Mel Huszti

The instigation for what would eventually become the PPDM Association in 1991 actually began several years earlier, in 1984, when Gulf Corporation had been purchased by Chevron. At the time, Mel Huszti was the coordinator of exploration mapping systems at Gulf Canada, in Calgary. "We had been dabbling with workstations and had similar systems between Gulf Canada and Gulf Corporation in Houston," he recalls. Most of Gulf Canada's workload continued to be processed on Unisys and IBM centralized systems, but in October, 1988, Gulf Canada announced it was phasing out its mainframe Unisys computer. Due to lower oil prices, their 1989 budget was also reduced, and there would be less emphasis on western Canada exploration activities. However, the company's emphasis on mapping and workstations would be increased. The target date for phasing out the Unisys computer was July, 1989.
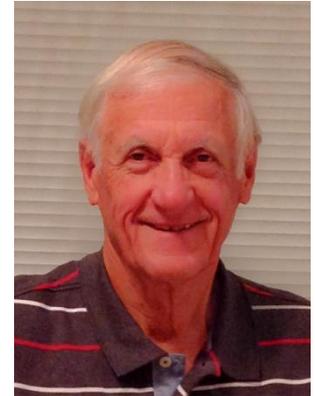
This meant that Gulf Canada needed to, among other things, replace in-house developed systems with vendor built systems. In conjunction with an "open" hardware strategy Gulf envisioned an "open" software strategy that would make use of an industry standard data base and network products. From an exploration application perspective, it would be desirable to plug into an existing 3rd party package which would provide general data base services and allow Gulf to add any specialized and proprietary products.

To achieve these goals, Huszti needed a common data model that would allow Gulf Canada to run geoscience and engineering software applications to access the same data from a consistent data structure. Mel approached Finder Graphics System, Applied Terravision Systems Inc. and Digitech Information Systems Ltd. to talk about developing a common data model. Starting such a project in Alberta had an advantage. The Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) had legislated requirements for submitting well data, making Alberta a regulatory environment that was very standards friendly – an approach that continues today.

Once the first version of the data model was published and presented at a GeoByte conference in late 1989, and again at the SEG conference in San Francisco, the data model was given away for the cost of the binders. The response was overwhelming. The team sent over one hundred floppy disks worldwide for $100 each. People were really excited; it was the late 1980s and people were astounded that someone was actually sharing a data model and willing to help improve it.

But creating a standard model for the petroleum industry that was accepted and actively employed by many diverse parties was a task beyond the scope and capabilities of any one company or a government agency. Some form of organization was needed that could transcend commercial and bureaucratic boundaries. It made sense to start a neutral, non-profit organization, so in 1989, Mel Huszti and Bob Tretiak, president of Applied Terravision, created the Public Petroleum Data Model (PPDM) User Group. The goal was to create an open, business driven data model for the petroleum industry with the participation of volunteers from a broad range of companies, government agencies, vendors and service companies.

In 1991, the PPDM Association was incorporated in Alberta under the Societies Act, making it a membership-based, not-for-profit society. The first Annual General Meeting of the PPDM Association was held in Calgary, in the fall of 1991. It consisted of a technical gathering, with technical papers and workshops, as well as incorporation of the board and the official adoption of the PPDM Association name.

In January 1995, Mel Huszti became PPDM's first paid Executive Director. And the rest is … history!

Art Boykiw

Art Boykiw is Vice President - Information Services at Alberta Energy Regulator – AER, where he is responsible for establishing the IS strategy and organizational capability to meet AER's integrated Information and systems vision enabling AER's regulatory mandate. Art is a key driver behind AER's transition to a Risk Based regulatory environment; as this project continues, this will result in faster and more effective regulatory management in Alberta.

Art's career in the petroleum industry began over 30 years ago with Dome Petroleum and Petro-Canada, progressing from programming regulatory production and royalty reporting systems in the 80's through project management in Exploration, Operations, Corporate and Financial Systems to Director Roles for Petro-Canada's East Coast, U.S., North American Oil and Gas and Oil Sands business units.

As an industry leader, Art also has been actively involved in the PPDM Association. He has been involved as a PPDM work group participant in the development of the PPDM Data Model. For over 13 years, Art served as a member of the PPDM Board of directors in various capacities, including Chairman for 10 years, and treasurer. Trudy points out that it is Art's fault that she is the CEO of the PPDM Association today!

Art has an impressive resume. He's even more impressive when you work with him. Art has been involved with PPDM since it's early days, and was an essential part of establishing much of the structure that PPDM has used. His vision has never been small, or modest. But they have been pretty successful! At Petro Canada, Art implemented PPDM standards in a way that allowed them to integrate data from a large asset acquisition into their technical systems in just a few weeks. His vision for a strong and successful data model has been realized, and yet he continues to advocate for more growth, more successes! This is a man who will never rest on his laurels.

Art's strategic visions encompass tremendous swaths of what our industry does. As co-chair of the Regulatory Data Standards Committee, Art envisions an environment in which, through standards, regulators and industry can work together more efficiently and effectively. He is advocating the adoption of common vocabularies, the development of a rules library that will help govern data from "cradle to grave". He is driving out completeness of data structures that will support all of the data in all of the life cycle processes in our industry.

Working with John Broderick, his co-chair from the Bureau of Land Management in the US, the committee consists of regulators around the globe. They have already initiated one work group (What is a Completion). Soon, another work group and a new committee are expected to form under the leadership of the Regulatory Data Standards Committee. When Art is successful, this work will transform the environment in which regulators work.

With Art, the question is never "can he do all of this?", but rather "can you keep up with him?"