



The Director's Digressions

By Bill Taylor

Happy New Year everyone! Yes.. this is the January journal even if you are reading it early. As I write this, it is December 2nd – the day after our chapter holiday party and my topic once again is what a great chapter we have!

We have three 'events' during our party:

- White Elephant gifts
- Oven Mitt game
- Trike award

The white elephant gift exchange is pretty standard. You bring a gift to participate and then steal or unwrap a gift based on your options. Over the years, we have had to create very specific rules since each family that participates in similar gift exchanges has a variety of rules that they follow. So we now have the MN-O rules that seem to work pretty well. At least I think they have worked fairly well the last couple years since there were no "discussions" about procedures.

The oven mitt game was started last year so we are still working out the kinks. We require a \$5 donation and limit the game to 10 players. The money raised is then given to the two families we adopt as part of our holiday tradition. The objective of this game, in case you've never played, is to remove all the wrapping paper while you have an oven mitt on each hand. To limit the amount of time you have, the next person to receive the oven mitts is attempting to shake doubles and once they do, the oven mitts and dice move to the next people in line. The person that removes the final piece of paper keeps the contents. Well, it seems I am using way too much tape while wrapping that box. And maybe too many layers of paper as well. So next year I will have to try using more layers of paper, but less tape and see how that works. It is always interesting to watch the mood change as it gets closer and closer to that final piece of paper!

This was the third year for the trike award. For more years than I've been a member of MN-O, a helmet award was issued each year. The person providing the award was the person that received the helmet the previous year. And the helmets were always hilarious and personalized for the person receiving it. However, early on, it was decided that once you received it, you never had to 'worry' about receiving it again. Well, we were running out of people to award it to. So, in 2016 I worked with the person that would be 'awarding' the helmet and we decided that a child's plastic trike would be used, decorated and awarded. That 'award ceremony' probably lasted 10 minutes and we all knew we had found a new tradition. Especially because now everyone was fair game again! This year the bike was painted to match the Vikings colors and presented as a "Vike Trike" with a few other "personalizations" – it was awesome!!!

So the party lasts about 4 hours and does include time for eating all the great pot-luck items people bring. And it seems like all we do is LAUGH! Laugh at the comments as people are unwrapping the white elephant items, laughing at the people playing the oven mitt game and of

course the trike award is always hilarious! So I have to say THANKS to all the members of MNO that make our get-togethers So Much Fun!

Thanks for reading,
bill