

Wednesday night before Thanksgiving (Thanksgiving Eve)

Many years ago, there was a computer company called Loonam Computer Products. A group of co-workers and their guests would gather each year to go to the Minnesota North Stars (they were the National Hockey League team in Minnesota before they moved to Dallas and became the Dallas Stars. Those dirty rats even kept our Star logo!).

The event became known as the "Loonam night at the North Stars". As ticket prices increased, and became more difficult to acquire, we stopped going to the games, but still gathered together on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving to enjoy the evening together. This became known as "Loonam night NOT at the North Stars". After the North Stars left, we would gather to consume massive amounts of alcohol and the night became "Loonam night Not at the Not North Stars". As time went on, the company was purchased by Avnet and the Company name was changed to Avnet Computer Products. So we became "NOT Loonam night NOT at the NOT North Stars". We still continued to gather and consume massive amounts of alcohol, generally at a bar, all of which were extremely smoky and crowded.

Tiring of that, we moved to attending a Minnesota Moose game (they were a minor league hockey team that played here between the North Stars and the Minnesota Wild). After the Moose left we began to go on hayrides and have a bonfire, always keeping up the tradition of consuming massive amounts of alcohol.

Eventually the ranches that gave hayrides went out of business – (notice a definite pattern developing here?) and we began gathering at a house to consume the alcohol and have a bonfire.

That brings us to the year 2003 and the following exchange of email. Each year's event is planned by "The Committee", whose members and exact makeup remain shrouded in secrecy. Years ago "The Committee" was autocratic, and its decisions went unchallenged. However, modern society has injected democracy and gender equity into "The Committee". The sequence begins with AD speaking on behalf of "The Committee", innocently seeking ideas for the 2003 event. Everything went down hill from there.

November 2003 – the 2003 event

Subject: Annual nite before Thanksgiving

Greetings Fun Seekers,

Time is getting near for the annual Thanksgiving Eve Hayride/bonfire.

If anyone has an idea or any suggestions for that night, please let me know, I will take them to the committee for consideration.

Let me know what you have in mind for Wednesday, Nov 26.

AD

Dear Committee Members, whoever they may be,

My lovely wife Carol has taken it upon herself to start planning a Thanksgiving Eve bonfire. I know it was wrong for her to do so without even notifying the committee as to her intentions. I don't think she understands this whole committee concept. Anyway, she has already invited a couple of friends that may come and one or two locals, so I won't be going anywhere else. She asked me to inform all of you about it Monday but, I didn't get a chance. So here it is for the committee to review....

Thanksgiving Eve Bonfire (Not at the North Stars, not at a Hayride)
The Broecker's Place

We will have the bonfire on the beach or in the backyard, I'm thinking most likely in the backyard. A nice November breeze off of the river is nice, for about five seconds.

There are enough beds for the folks coming from N.D. and Canada to imbibe and spend the night. In fact everyone's welcome to stay so that we don't have to worry about our friends driving home.

Knowing my Wife we'll have some tables with snacks and such, more likely a buffet, on the porch. I don't have the details I just know that I will be in charge of firewood though.

Al, sorry I didn't mention this Saturday, I just found out on Sunday myself. Bring this in front of the committee and if it passes we be honored to host the event.

Steve

Sometime after that email, an insurgent group within "The Committee" rejected this application, and proposed hosting the event south of the river. And you will notice after the following request, the immediate response is to award the event to that location without further consideration.

Hello -

Unfortunately, I did not receive the below e:mail as it went to my previous e:mail address. It looks like we have some firm plans below, however, if I might intercede. I would like to offer the Decker house as the party-spot if it will make it easier for those with kids and drunk parents to partake in the pre-Thanksgiving event.

We have a fire pit and it will be outside next to the finished basement where all concerned parents can keep an eye on their kids as they watch carefully selected videos. Just a thought.

Let us know and we would be happy to host.

Lori

The committee, who shall remain anonymous at this time due to national security concerns, has decreed that the annual Pre-Thanksgiving bash shall be taking place this year at the Decker's lovely abode in Savage, MN.

Festivities will begin around 5 PM or whenever the fun people – and you know who you are - get there.

It's a potluck, bring your own beverages, something to grill and let Lori know if you will be bringing anything to share. Everyone is welcome - Even those of us without kids or drunk parents.

Kristen

We support the committee's latest security council resolution. We hope to see you there.

Mark

Glad the committee made the decision. God knows, we couldn't decide on our own. Thank you committee people. Location doesn't really matter, it's more just having the chance to enjoy some good old friendship! Thank you Steve and Lori for hosting this years annual Pre-Thanksgiving bash. See you next week.

Luann

Most people, like the two above, simply responded in a positive and thoughtful manner. One agitator had to send the following email to stir the pot and begin a flurry of emails, some savaging the writer.

Subject: FW: Annual nite before Thanksgiving

Hello Funseekers,

Thanks so much to The Committee for their determined and diligent deliberations and decision on this dilemma, with special consideration given to the drunken parents. I will not be bringing drunken parents, it does create a bit of a logistics problem for me since I would have to drive to Pine City and back in order to get my drunken parents there by 5:00 PM.

It would appear that the Feminization of The Committee has begun, since now we are not only considering the accommodation of children in the traditionally drunken debauchery (Insert your own Michael Jackson joke here), but have also injected food and eating into the event. I'm sure if any of the old "Loonam Night at the North Stars" gang were dead they would be rolling over in their grave at these developments.

And, I must compliment The Committee their fore-sight in putting the fire pit outside the finished basement. It would have been much more comfortable for all of us to have had it inside the finished basement, but I respect your decision to have it outside so that we can be all inclusive and accommodate both smokers and non-smokers in this festive event.

Laying all of this aside, I am planning to attend, however do have a few questions which The Committee didn't seem to make totally clear. It was requested that we notify the Hostess if we are planning on bringing something to share, which immediately begs the question - If we are bringing something but don't plan on sharing with anyone, are we still obliged to notify the Hostess? Or, must we keep it in our own vehicle and sneak out there to devour? Assuming I am brining something to share, how many of you like pickled bison tongue? What about those little barbequed cocktail weenies?

Will arrangements be made for hot toddies should anyone so choose?

Hoping to see all of you at Casa Sanchez on Wednesday the 26th.

AD

Concern does arise with the use of "hot toddies" (could this mean 'hot toddlers'?) and "weenies" which could be misconstrued as a reference to the elusive Mr. Jackson. I will assume not!

Pickled bison tongue is a delicacy in some areas but I will not be partaking of this tasty food!

"Feminization" is not a bad thing so please be prepared for the use of cups, utensils and plates which I am sure is a departure from past gatherings!!!

Can't wait to see everyone! Dan and I will be bringing a dish to pass (I have converted to the MN verbiage! Dang it!) Have a great week!

Suzanne

Dear Concerned Constituent,

Thank you for writing. We take umbrage at your suggestion that the Committee has become Feminized. We prefer to think of it as Civilized.

Of course, this would be a moot point had the testosterone drenched version of the committee actually made a decision.

Regarding the barbequed cocktail weenies - I believe a certain gentlemen of uncertain ancestry has a lock on the little weenies. And if you bring pickled bison tongue we would appreciate it if you did retreat to your car to indulge. But feel free to bring something that we might actually like. Looking forward to seeing you, with or without drunk parents next Wednesday.

The Ad-Hoc Committee Chairperson (s)

Al,

Where did this all go so terribly wrong???

The Loonam Night-at-the-North Stars > Night-not-at-the-North Stars > Hayride > Bonfire has now turned into a Potluck!

Where did the food ever come into this night! With food you get those complications such as needing cups, plates and utensils that were mentioned in another note. Beer comes in it's own disposable utensil.

Next thing you know we're going to have to have Non-Alcoholic beverages, quiche, or table clothes and finger-bowls.

Oh well it will still be good to see everyone and have a fun night. Who was it that said "If I weren't hung-over it wouldn't be Thanksgiving"?

Steve

Poor Disillusioned Steve,

Perhaps we are becoming Metrosexuals.

(MET.roh.sek.shoo.ul) n. A dandyish narcissist in love with not only himself, but also his urban lifestyle; a straight man who is in touch with his feminine side.

Or, maybe we have been turned into Metrosexuals by of our constant and prolonged exposure to DA's. Gone are the beer drinking, tobacco spitting, cigar smoking, "real" men of old, leaving us with emaciated, wine sipping, civilized humans. My God! We have all evolved into Dave Lekander!!

Within 5 years I predict our Wednesday before Thanksgiving will consist of sitting around living room with a gas fireplace in the background, listening to "The Carpenters" playing faintly in the background. Meanwhile others of the group will be in the basement in front of the TV watching Little Mermaid videos with the children. Makes you want to stop wearing seat belts doesn't it.

signed, Dear Ayedee.

That Damn Tom was a Dear friend of the group who relocated due to employment, and was missing this important event for the first time in years.

Hmmmm, should I use dried cherries or raisins in my dressing? Walnuts or pignolis'?

Should I have a nip of 18 year Macallen or a pint of Yahhhg?

These are the negotiations I will have, with myself, in preparation for my Thanksgiving.

There is one thing non negotiable, I will miss you this Thanksgiving! Give my best to all, regardless what you do.

All the Best, That Damn Tom & Family

Boy, how times they are a changin..

First, we have the liberliazation of one of the oldest institutions in "The Committee", then Food???
What ever happened to the good ol days when we started the day with a breakfast Bud, and ended with a nightcap of Jose or Yaggie?

Well it's sure lucky I'm still "flexible"!

See you all there..

Dave

It's funny you should bring up the Carpenters. I just acquired their greatest hits. I'll bring it so we can gather around the fake fire, roast cocktail weenies and sing.....

It'll be the best pre Thanksgiving bash ever!

Kristen

some things never change....

The sun comes up, the sun goes down.
The tide comes in, the tide goes out.
There's a "sandwich" in every beer, and yes, there is STILL a "sandwich" in every beer.

Dan

A wise man once said, "Why waste a 20 dollar drunk on a 2 dollar hamburger?" Needs to be adjusted for inflation, but the thought still holds true! ;-)

Steve D

MONDAY, Nov. 24th

I wanted to share the following message that I received back from my mother, Patsy. You may remember her from our Thanksgiving eve hayride in 1999...

Dear Suzanne and Dan: After being made aware of the elaborate plans for this year's Night Before Thanksgiving Event, I am really put out that you and Dan did not invite me as your token "drunken parent". However, after fully reviewing the details and realizing that no hayride is involved and thus, probably only a smattering of that liquor of so many different flavors (which would be my dish to pass), I am therefore declining this year's event (were I invited). Regards to all. Mother

Hopefully she can join us at some future date with her "liquor of so many different flavors"! It is her specialty!!!

Have a great day and we are looking forward to seeing you all on Wednesday night...

One question... Do we bring "THE CORN"? or would you like us to bring something else to pass? Majority vote rules!!!

Suzanne

You have my vote for "THE CORN"!!!

Dave

We want "THE CORN" !!!
You can come and leave Dan but bring "THE CORN".
Dan can come and leave you but bring "THE CORN"
You can both come and bring the baby, but bring "THE CORN"
You can bring your mother, but bring "THE CORN"
You can all come, but bring "THE CORN"
If you have any questions regarding "THE CORN", see items 1 - 6 above.

AD

YOU ARE HILARIOUS! Looking forward to seeing you!!!

Suzanne

To All,

I just have to share the first response about "THE CORN"... Al was the first to respond and I do feel that he says it all...
Suzanne

So now Mr. "I can never make a decision until the last minute" chimes in, attempting to disrupt the plans already established. Also, by way of innuendo, attempts to cast aspersions on the character of some of the attendees.

Geez, I leave town and am out of touch for a couple of days and the leadership of The Committee is co-opted by the radical feminists! A revolution has taken place right under the noses of the simpering excuses for males I left behind to mind the store in my absence. You know who you are, and you should be ashamed!

When I left, the plan was we're outdoors roughing it at the Broecker's. Food? We don't need no stinking food! Eat your beer label if you're hungry! Chew on some firewood. Kids, babies? You bundle them up like little Michelin men, or you dump them on any gullible friend/relative!

We are Minnesotans for cripes sakes! Remember? Where anyone worth their salt can lay their hands on choppers, snowmobile suits and Sorels.

When I was a kid we put bread bags over our feet and under our socks for warmth. We stuffed newspapers in our Army surplus parkas (remember the ones with the fur hoods and orange lining?) to keep warm. Besides what's a little frostbite amongst friends? Builds character. Gives a kid something to talk about later in life when they're old and drunk on the night before Thanksgiving. We don't sit in a finished basement watching Disney DVDs and sipping decaf Lattes, we go out and confront what nature brings us!

Now suddenly upon my arrival back home I find out everything's changed. The radical feminists have coerced the cowed (note the root term for previous adjective...) males into accepting a kinder gentler plan.

We're all going to be warm and safe in a house (My house no less!) No bitter cold, no horseshit to step in, no red jacketed security guards to contend with. It's almost like a freakin Euphorian lovefest. Are we going to sing Kumbaya? Who's bringing the quiche? Maybe we could do some quilting or embroidery or something fun like that? I think I'm going to puke!

Everybody bring a plate to share? What the...? That's socialism folks! We don't approve of socialism, and you men just laid down without a whimper. Can you hear that sound? That's John Wayne rolling over in his grave!

In order to inject some traditional male-dominated leadership and a badly needed testosterone back into this planning effort, I've taken upon myself to right the ship as a rugged male individualist should!
Right men? Hello? Anybody out there? Can you hear me now?? ;-)

I was thinking what do men do well? The list is so long, that in the interest of brevity I can't share it all, so I had to prune it down to the following: Burn things and Kill things for food.

So in light of those core competencies, Broeck will be bringing a lot of wood to burn, plus I have surplus junk furniture I've been saving up for a good bonfire (as good as one can have in a little firepot thingy which the euphorians have forced upon us through their incessant ordinances and lawsuits!) It's no fun if you only burn firewood, you have to burn stuff too. Ah, the sweet scent of burning particle board... brings tears to my eyes.

Also, if you're going to have food, then it should be of the dead animal variety, preferably one composed of red meat! CORN? That's not food, that's venison bait! I will be providing slow cooked beef brisket (no doubt from a cow killed by a man), buns and BBQ sauce in sufficient quantities for any I choose to give it to. I want to be clear, I'm not sharing this food out of some femi-socialist utopian vision, this is definitely not driven by a gentle concern for the collective, but rather to ensure that the foundation of this gathering is based on eating dead cow flesh and burning stuff, as it should be! If you meet my criteria as a decent person, then you may fill up on the meat I've provided, if you don't, then I think that the Macaroni Grill has take-out quiche!

Be Well. See you Wednesday...

Steve

We're still bringin' CORN....

Suzanne

Good. It might come in handy. We can spread some in the woods and see if we can lure in some real food!

Steve

Dont listen to him Suzanne. It's a well known fact - among those who can read - that in traditional hunter/gatherer societies the bulk of the tribes nutrition was contributed by the gatherers. Since it was the men who tended to stand around the fire, get drunk and tell big lies they got all the credit.

Kristen

Ya!!!!, I agree with Steve... What a shame the wimps on "The Committee", and you know who you are, have no control over your households like Steve and I do. Out of rebellion I am going to bring a cigar and I am going to spit on the patio. I will not be cowed by the Femi-nazis into rolling over like other emasculated males. (Please don't forward this on to Tess).

AD

I retract my previous statement; I guess YOU don't know who YOU are! So how could one expect YOU to be ashamed?

Steve

Suzanne,

Yeah! Ditto what they said (please don't forward this on to Tess).

Dan

Wow ... this is all too funny.

What happened to the "Guys" from the old Loonam Service Dept???? Are they like the Met, the North Stars and Hayrides a thing of the past.

Hmmmm ... maybe that's okay in the long run that you all have changed. Now that I am reminding how you really were back then. You all know I have stories on each one of you! It's a good thing you all made good choices (or just got damn lucky) and married good woman that let you still hang around with each other Thanksgiving Eve.

Luann

Finally, we get to the root of the matter. You should all be thankful you've been feminized. It's the best thing that ever happened to any of you. I know my husband thinks so. (Please don't send this to Mike).

Kristen

Please don't send any of these to Mike. He still thinks the bonfire is going to be at his place!!

AD

I better let him know, I don't want to drive myself....

Kristen

Boy, this whole thing is starting to look alot like the damn presidential campaign!

You've got accusations, finger pointing, mis represented facts, waffling, and attempted cover ups!
(ie: please don't forward this to Tess).

It's looking like Wednesday is going to be more like the Iowa Democratic debates, than the old Loonam Night not at the Northstars, and playing games like lets hide from LeKander.

Next thing you know, the ACLU will file a lawsuit stating the lack of separation between Booze and Food!

Oh how I yern for the good ol days when the Men were Men, and the sheep were scared! (any one seen Bob Bauers lately??BAAAHB).

Now, its the men are either Michael Jackson, or a priest, and the little boys are scared!

All I can say is there will be NO QUICHE brought by me, just good ol' Alcohol, and a Cigar.

I say it's time for "The Commitee" get there nards back, and take back our annual holiday!!!

(PS, don't forget to bring "THE CORN")

Dave

One last retort:

All, my apologies continuing to fill your inbox, but it's silence in the face of comments such as those espoused by the FFoTC (Feminist Faction of The Committee) which has gotten us to the dire situation in which we're already entangled. Those statements shall not stand unchallenged!

Point 1: Tell me, how does one "gather" a purse from Coach? Don't you have to kill something and skin it first? You like hunter/gatherer societies so much? I'm sure there's some openings for membership in a hunter/gatherer tribe in the Amazon region or perhaps Papua/New Guinea.

Be warned though, no shirts allowed (hey wait a minute that doesn't sound so bad!) and you have to poop in the woods and eat grubs and insects and such. Definite shortage of hair driers and eyelash curlers (not to mention myriad shoes, bicycle helmets, cell phones, health clubs, pampered chef parties and Oprah on TV) in hunter/gatherer societies. Gather that!

Point 2: The drunken men circled around the fire, bellies sticking out, each with one hand in pocket, figured out how to do all the stuff that got you gatherers out of rooting for grubs, pooping in the woods (Thanks to Thomas Crapper!) or hanging curtains on the wall of your cave! It's funny how a little alco-lubrication greases the inventive minds of men, and contributes to ideas like: How to start a fire (see core competency in previous note!), domesticating animals, inventing the wheel, the lever, the silicon-based integrated circuit and cable TV.

Point 3: It's a proven scientific fact that beer is nutritious (hence the term "beer belly"), so go gather your nuts, and leave us in peace to hang out at the fire eating charred animal flesh, drinking beer and solving the problems of the universe!

Jane you ignorant slut! :-)

See ya, Bye

Steve

I now have more messages in my Thanksgiving bash folder than I do for some of the projects that actually pay my salary.....

Kristen

All,



Suzanne and I will also bring some food for the kids....I found Nemo

Dan

Didn't one of the members of the committee get shlt on by a cow? That caused a loss of credibility for the rest of you boyz!

Lori
