

## Where Were You?

A review of the September Meeting

By Preston Shimer, FAI

We know why one member missed the meeting. The heel of her shoe broke and she couldn't walk without getting it fixed. We know that the six members of the chapter who made the meeting had a great time. The Rivers Club provided good food and atmosphere as usual. It was such a good meeting that I felt the need to tell all the members who were not there about it. And urge you not to miss another.

My guess you stayed home because of the subject of the presentation. **“Can a Six Sigma Black Belt Improve your Organization’s IG/RIM Program?”** For most of us, “black belt” has something to do with judo and “six sigma” just doesn’t mean anything, unless you work for an organization that is using “Six Sigma” as a tool for improving the business. I could have visited our web site to read about the meeting, [http://armapittsburgh.org/ai1ec\\_event/6sigmablackbelt/?instance\\_id=811](http://armapittsburgh.org/ai1ec_event/6sigmablackbelt/?instance_id=811) , and learned that “Six Sigma” is a major quality improvement program that organizations in Pittsburgh and around the world are using with the goal of making major improvements in efficiency. The “belt” designations indicate the level of training and responsibility that people involved in the process earn by study and performance. Some people in our field of information and records management have found that earning a “belt” was beneficial to their careers. And that’s the reason you should have been at this meeting.

Information management, (and that is what we do, right?) turns out to be at the core of what Six Sigma is all about. I doubt that the Six Sigma people would say this, but it is the truth. Information management is at the core of every profession and discipline when you think about it. The speaker, Eric Rosenfelder, a West Point grad with active duty service behind him, an MBA from Penn State, and a variety of work experiences, earned his “black belt” at General Electric and is now working out at Highmark. (Working out is my term. I can’t resist the analogy.) Health care reform is forcing the insurance and health care industries to change dramatically. Eric explained that the Six Sigma approach is being used extensively at Highmark. He passed along a lot about Six Sigma and I have a better understanding about quality control, matrixes, data collection and analysis efforts that are being made by the rank and file in organizations using this approach. I also see a major role for information managers to be heavily involved. Our jobs already enable us to understand much more about our organizations than the typical worker. Because we get involved in all aspects of the business, we can provide insights into opportunities for improvements that the Six Sigma approach could make happen. One member, Solanda Peek, told us that she knows her organization is going to start a Six Sigma program, so she is getting trained to become a black belt and, at the same time, she is at work earning the IGP (Information Governance Professional). I think she is doing the smart thing.

The best part of the evening came during the question and answer period. In case you haven’t been looking, there is an institutional territorial fight going on in our region between UPMC and Highmark. Somebody had to ask Eric about what’s going on....something like “How is Six Sigma going to solve the fight between Highmark and UPMC?” It was a conversational free for all after that. You should have been there.