



January 2015

Meet the 2015 Chair: Joe Lindsey

Who am I? Why am I here? Those were the opening questions asked by Admiral James Stockdale during the 1992 Vice President debate. Stockdale was one half of the Ross-Perot-for-President Ticket.

Today you may be wondering the same things about me. Who am I? Why am I here? Let me try to explain by starting with a Chet Walden story.

Chet was the 2012 M&A Source Chair. You may or may not know that Chet loved dogs. One day a few years ago Chet and some of his friends were strolling through their local shopping center and stopped at the pet store. Looking through the front windows, they could see the puppies that were available for adoption. The puppies were a lively bunch... chasing each other's tails, jumping on each other...generally just doing what puppies do.

But over in the corner of the bin, one puppy, kind of a mutt, just sat there watching the others play. That mutt was kind of like the Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer of the bunch because none of the other puppies asked him to join in their puppy games.

Well, Chet looked at that mutt and said "There's something about that little puppy that I like." Chet's friends looked at him like he was crazy. "Chester, are you kidding? Why that puppy?" they asked. "It's just sitting there like a bump on a log. The other puppies are better looking, more active, and would probably make better pets."

But Chet was undeterred by their skepticism. He looked at that mutt and said, "That's the one I want. I'm taking him home with me." Although his friends couldn't understand why Chet was so infatuated with the mutt, they said "Ok Chet. Go ahead. It's your call."

As legendary radio man Paul Harvey used to say, "And now for the rest of the story."

As it turns out, Chet's friends were the M&A Source Board of Directors. The shopping center was the list of M&A Source members. The pet store was the list of potential candidates to serve in leadership positions. And the mutt that Chet adopted that day...that was me.

Up until then I was pretty much an unknown commodity to most of the Board. Dora and Chet vouched for me and my name was put on the ballot as a Board nominee. You, the M&A Source members, voted me onto the Board.

I told you this story, not because there's anything special about me, but because I'm sure there are more Rudolph's in our midst today. I'm asking you to join in our reindeer games. We are a volunteer-driven association and we have several committees that would welcome you to join in. Serving our members has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life.

So, getting back to Admiral Stockdale's questions: who am I? I'm just a guy like most of you. And like you, I care about The M&A Source and what it can do to help us succeed in this crazy business.

Why am I here? I'm here because of Chet Walden. In 2012 Chet was the Chair of the Board and I was in the early months of my first term as a member of the Board. He became my friend and mentor, always full of encouragement. That's also when he told me "one day you will be the Chair of the M&A Source."

From that day on, he continued to reinforce the idea that one day I would become Chair. I don't know how many arms he had to twist or how many people he had to threaten, but the Board agreed with him...I was selected to be the 2015 Chair. He was so excited.

The last time I talked with Chet was Wednesday, June 18th. We talked about plans for 2015 and his willingness to help me in any way that he could. He was really looking forward to seeing me as the Chair. Chet died less than 48 hours later, but he died knowing that I would be the 2015 Chair of The M&A Source.

Just as Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer accepted the challenge to guide Santa's sleigh on that long ago Christmas Eve, I gladly accept this challenge...one that Chet was confident that I could and would accept. I just wish that he was here to share this experience with me.

Hey Pal. I'll do my best to make you proud.

I take great comfort in knowing that I'll be surrounded by a tremendous team of volunteers...not just the Board of Directors, the Chairs of the Committees and their committee members, but also by the incredible leaders who came before us and the unwavering support of the Meeting Expectations team.

One more lesson from Chet...life is short, so make the most of your time. Work like you don't need the money. Love like you've never been hurt. Dance like you do when nobody's watching!

Joe Lindsey, M&AMI, CBI
2015 M&A Source Chair