

THE OBJECTIVES:

- To honor the efforts and enthusiasm of the Boosters
- To review "business stuff" with them: goals, objectives, etc.
- To motivate Boosters, to renew their drive to **ASK** fellow workers, peers, cohorts, managers, etc. to contribute.

The Writer & Director:

Eric Paulsen

THE APPROACH

The concept is to use two live performers: one is a "Special Booster", who will sit at the head table and who will be attired in a myriad of B.E.G.N.F. promotional stuff: T-shirt, buttons, hat... Enough to label him as an *enthusiastic* Booster (if not a little eccentric) but not enough to make him a jerk. The second performer will be the "Bag Lady", replete with shopping cart full of all kinds of interesting stuff.

THE EVENT

At the breakfast/brunch/lunch, the head honcho basically says that they'll go ahead with serving the food and eating.

The food is served, the folks are eating. Towards the end of the meal, our Bag Lady saunters in with her shopping cart. She has a wireless Mic on, so we hear her mumbling as she goes from table to table, grabbing a roll here, a cup of coffee there, maybe grabbing some B.E.G.N.F. "souvenirs"... There will be a little initial confusion or even discomfort at seeing this type of person "invading" their protective zone, but the wireless Mic (hearing her voice over the PA) will quickly and effectively diffuse that reaction, and will let people know, "Oh, this is a performance!"

Our Special Booster engages in a conversation / argument / repartee / interaction with her, a humorous exchange that pokes fun at a bunch of issues and idiosyncrasies and stereotypes surrounding B.E.G.N.F. Their interaction is sarcastically / playfully hostile: they appear to be at each other's throats, but we know they're just having some serious fun.

The Special Booster asserts that he has some business to talk about to all these people. The Bag Lady says, what the heck, she'll help. So he delivers the business report while she handles the overhead view-foils, neither with a great deal of proficiency, but both with a great deal of humor.

The ending has a serious message, but can still be light-hearted. We want to leave the attendees with an inspirational feeling, an enthusiasm and motivation about B.E.G.N.F. (and, of course, with the mission firmly implanted to go out and conquer, to **ask** co-workers to help out).

SETTING:

There will be 8 (?) performances spread out across Puget Sound: Everett, Auburn, Kent, Bellevue, Renton, Boeing Field area... They will typically be breakfast meetings (maybe a couple lunches), with an audience of 100-350 people (Renton may require a breakfast and lunch performance). So, think of yourself in a cafeteria-type or hotel group-dining or executive dining room (lotts tables & people) setting. People are eating, talking, hopefully having a good time. We don't know what their expectations are: this is the first

time we've had smaller meetings like this, and the food idea is new as well. They probably figure that they're eating now, but the boring stuff will soon be foisted upon them, or they assume there will be another mini-major media extravaganza. 100-350 Engineers, Factory folk, Office people, Managers... The one common denominator is their obvious community commitment. They all volunteered to be involved in soliciting contributions, giving up time and energy to administrative stuff and wanting to make the proverbial difference. Boeing just made it easy.

So, there we are. A cafeteria or executive dining or hotel dining room full of community-minded Boeing employees eating away and expecting *something*.

WHO ARE THEY?

The "Booster Plant" is, by all appearances and attitude, a very enthusiastic Booster. He has all kinds of B.E.G.N.F. promotional materials: T-shirt, buttons, pens, an old coffee cup on the table, maybe a banner or something on/attached to the table near his seat... So, he likes his stuff, he's proud to display it and proud to be a long-time Booster, and proud to have been chosen as a speaker at this event. He's also a little insecure, and more reactionary than calm and accepting, he erupts more than calmly evaluates, he *does* before he *thinks*... Inside, there is also a certain whiny/little spoiled brat. At the beginning, he is serious. But he progressively turns into a competitive, whiny, spoiled child who wants his way and is threatened by the Bag Lady's presence and assertive personality.

BERNICE the Bag Lady (who asserts she's not a Bag Lady, but rather a Shopping Cart Person) is an assertive, slightly off-center, self-sufficient woman who has spent most of her life living on the street. Maybe we find out why, maybe not; maybe she got laid off a job or a hubby left, she had a daughter, and it was a conscious decision to be with the daughter rather than be away or she didn't have the skills for a job that could support child care along with the other usual living costs. Whatever, the picture we want to paint is that she's not a drug-abuser or alcoholic, she's not a creep or morally twisted, she's not just too damn lazy to be working... She's a real, intelligent, self-determined woman with a quirk or two (or three, or four...).

SCRIPT

by Eric Paulsen

People are eating, most near the end of their dining experience. The Bag Lady walks in, making a racket, maybe having trouble getting the shopping cart (full of B.E.G.N.F. promo materials, some food and clothing, maybe a radio that's blaring) over some wires or the threshold. Maybe she solicits some help from someone standing there. Again, we hear her over the PA.

She meanders between tables, staying pretty much opposite where the head table is (where the "Booster Plant" character is seated with the other Head Honchos). She interacts with some folks, collecting food and promo stuff, maybe trading with some of the audience. (These are suggestions: Suzie will have free reign to improvise, one of the talents that brings her to this project)

BERNICE:

Hey, is that the cup from 2 years ago? Gee, I don't have

that one. Can I have that? Or, tell you what, I'll trade a genuine 1982 button, very rare, for that cup, huh?

BERNICE:

Say, you should be able to get better (food item) than these things. They're stale, and they just don't *squeeze* the way I like (food item) to squeeze.

BERNICE:

O-o-o. I like that pen, the one in your pocket protector. Say, that's a real unique pocket protector, too.

BERNICE:

Hey, where's all those baseball hats you guys usually wear, I mean, even inside. Never could figure it, but, hey, I liked it. You know, I have a collection of maybe, oh, a million hats. Just like that one. Yeah.

BERNICE:

Y'know, that picture on your badge doesn't look anything like you. But, y'know, it does kinda look like me, don't ya think? I mean, just a little? Yeah, maybe you'll, y'know, let me borrow it sometime so I can sack out in one of those big jumbo-jets you guys make. Y'think?

At some point in this scenario (2 minutes or so into the performance), we hear the Booster Plant (BOB) talking to a Head Honcho at the table.

Head Honcho:

Oh, great, her again.

BOB:

Who? Whattaya mean, "again?" Hey, look at all that great *stuff* she has. She has tons of great *stuff*, stuff *I* don't even have. What gives here? Who the heck is she?

He stands up.

BOB:

Uh, hello? Excuse me, there, ma'am...

(she ignores him)

Uh, *excuse* me, but who the heck are you and what exactly are you *doing* here? I don't remember any bag ladies being on the...

BERNICE:

Hey, hey, hey there, buster. I ain't no "Bag Lady", I'm a "Shopping Cart Person." That's S.C.P. for you Boeing folk. Got it?

BOB *(flustered, embarrassed)*:

Uh, yeah, sure, a Shopping Cart Person. Okay. But where the heck did you get all that stuff?

BERNICE:

Oh, this stuff? Well, y'see, I'm the curator of a little B.E.G.N.F. museum I'm putting together, way back in a

corner of that Curiosity Shop down on the waterfront. You know the one I mean...

BOB:

Yes, yes, yes, I *know* the place. With the wooden Indians, the mummified heads, the Indian art... Oh, not that I've ever been there, *myself*, but, you know...

(groping, changing the subject, trying to recover)

... a "BEG-NEF" museum?

BERNICE:

That's *B.E.G.N.F.*, buster. Where you been?

(she rummages through file in cart, pulls out memos)

C'mon, it's been all over the place! Y'see, they don't think having the word "BEG" blurted out like that is such a hot idea. I'm not particularly fond of the word either, if ya woulda asked. Let's see here... Didn't you get this memo, number Q dash ninety-eight-fifty-seven dash S-P-R dash nine-two-four, which states... ahem... "Henceforth and heretofore, the term "BEG-NEF" should not be used in referring to the Boeing Employee Good Neighbor Fund. We strongly urge that the terms "Good Neighbor Fund" or "B.E.G.N.F." be used when referring to the aforementioned group name. i.e. Boeing Employee Good Neighbor Fund."

BOB:

Okay, fine, but what... What... Why... A *B.E.G.N.F.* museum?

BERNICE:

Well, yeah, y'know, just a little something to say, "Thanks!" to these folks. 'Cause that Operational Emergency Center place really helped me out, oh, back about 5 or 6 years ago.

(to audience)

Like these threads I got on? I got 'em there. Yep, pretty nice huh? Then there was that housing program, the Lutheran Compass Center, that was real useful last winter, y'know, when you'd sneeze and it'd freeze right there in front of your face. Course, that Crisis Clinic, they kinda helped me screw my head back on, too, if you catch my drift. Now, I'm not much on accepting charity. I pretty much fend for myself. But those agencies helped me out of a couple of tight spots. So I just started collectin' stuff, and I've got a little showcase back in the corner...

BOB:

Wait, wait, hold on, there. Who'd go to a "BEG-NEF"...

BERNICE:

Hey, hey, hey... That's **B.E.G.N.F.**

BOB:

Yeah, okay, okay. So who'd go to a "B.E.G.N.F." Museum? And how'd they find it stuck way back in a corner of that weird place?

BERNICE:

Oh, well, mostly Boeing folk, I s'pose. But, I tell ya, you can spot 'em a good two or three blocks away. Yeah, I just have Bart or Evie stand out there spottin' 'em, and they just sorta funnel 'em on in.

BOB: (to Spangler/Pulham)

Hey, do you know anything about this, this museum?

(*he/they shrug, "No"*)

BOB (*starting to turn into the whining kid*):

Yeah? Okay, so, hey, who... Who... Who the heck said you could even *have* a museum, huh? And where'd you get all that neat... *stuff*?

BERNICE:

Oh, I just picked 'em up from... well, all over the place. I started back in, oh, about 11 or 12 years ago. It all started when I was visiting a good friend at one of those agencies you tour. Yep, I was there visiting and helping out a little, y'know, giving up some time to peel some potatoes and stuff, when these folks all come through, dressed like... well, not like street folk. Anyway, I walked out and climbed on the bus, there, thinking it was headed for Southcenter. Whoa, was I wrong. But the people were nice, so I just sorta hung out. I started getting to all the meetings, all the training sessions, all those big event kinda things, I'd try to get in on the tours, y'know, hang out at the agency you'd be visitin', non-chalant-like... I tell ya, you folks go to an awful lot of meetings and all. I had to cut way back. Number one, there's never any good food at 'em, like some decent donuts or something. Number two, there's way too many of 'em. Number three, those big media extravaganzas, like those kick-off events, well, there's so many cords running all over the place, and huge piles of slide projectors, video cameras stuck every place there's not a seat, and you keep it so darn dark in there... Me and my shopping cart here just can't seem to maneuver, y'know? So I stopped going. Now, *these* meetings, well, I have to say these are just fine. I like smaller groups like this, with the lights turned on and good food... well, decent food on the tables. Yep, I find this is real fine. And the proverbial gold mine of stuff for my museum. It's almost *obscene* how much stuff there is, but me, I'm not complaining. Nope. It's real pretty stuff,

and fetches a much better price than the old 62 World's Fair stuff... (RDE?)

BOB (*jealous of all the neat stuff BERNICE has*):

Wait, wait, hold on there. You've been going to these events for *how many years*? And going to all those *meetings* and all those *events* and, and... AND COLLECTING ALL THAT STUFF?!?

BERNICE:

Yep. How long you been going?

BOB:

Oh, well, a long time. Yeah. Lottsa, lottsa years. Probably even longer than you, (ahem), uh... (*realizes he doesn't know name*)

What's your name?

BERNICE:

Bernice. 'Least that's the one I use. Real name's Wendy. Who're you?

BOB:

Uh, Robert. Bob. Uh... Why use Bernice when your name's Wendy?

BERNICE:

Well, Robert Bob, Bernice is an acronym. Stand's for *B.E.G.N.F. Endearing Resource 'N' Information Collection Engineer*.

BOB:

Oh, and I suppose you think that gives you the right to open a museum? A "BEG-NEF"...

BERNICE:

HEY!

(*to audience or person or table*)

He keeps doing that. C'mon, YOU tell him. C'mon, all together now...

B.E.G.N.F.

BOB:

Uh... well, okay, a B.E.G.N.F. Museum?

(*to Spangler/Pulham/Elliott/?*)

A muSEum? Why... Can't I... I mean, I've been a real good Booster an' all... Can I have a museum, too?

BERNICE (*transition from aggressor to mom*):

Want some cheese and crackers with that *whine*, eh, Robert Bob? (Chuckles) Tell you what, there, maybe I could use some help, y'know, at the Museum, eh?

(*mumbles to herself*)

I knew Child Psych 304 would come in handy, but Jiminy Cricket...

BOB (*eager or challenging???*):
Oh, yeah? I could, like, help out? So, what would I be doing? Could I run the place? Huh?

BERNICE:
Well, whattaya do now. As a Booster.

BOB:
Oh, well, I do all sorts of stuff. I mean, I have a real good collection of neat stuff, maybe even more than you do. And I help out at meetings like this, and at the training sessions... The meetings and the training and all the events... Well, that's not so bad, or hard. It's kinda fun. What's tough is getting other Boeing people to sign up, you know, contribute. I mean, you hear all kind of excuses. Like, "I don't have the time right now!"

BERNICE:
Oh, don't I know it, don't I know it. I get that too. Like I'm supposed to believe they'll come back when they *do* have time?

BOB:
Yeah, and "I don't have any money." Jeez, it's only a few bucks outta their paycheck. Or "I can't give until I get my raise."

BERNICE:
Sounds a little like retaliating against the wrong people, huh? Blaming the victim? So they expect you to go talk to their boss and get 'em a raise so they'll contribute?

BOB:
Yeah, I think they do. And then we get people that don't want to contribute if the money's going to stuff they don't agree with, like abortion clinics or big salaries, so they don't contribute anything, even when you tell 'em they can pick where the money goes.

BERNICE:
Yeah, I get the same thing. A lotta folk just assume I'm gonna buy a bottle of cheap wine or something. So they don't want to contribute to my *moral degradation*. Well, first off, you can't assume every street person's just out to abuse themselves. Mostly, we don't. I've got a lot more pride than that. Second off, on that rare special occasion when I do *partake*, I'd just as soon have a nice fume, y'know, a dry sauvignon with a delicate bouquet and not too fruity over that *cheap* stuff... *I got taste!*

BOB:
Some people say they give regularly at church. Or they have their own charities or agencies they give to.

BERNICE:
Which is great, but I'm here now, on the street, and I'm

hungry now, and sometimes I see 'em having brunch at some hoity-toity restaurant down in the Square on Sunday morning. And, y'know, it's great to give to agencies you really believe in, but it seems kinda smart to take a little and spread it all around. I mean, 30 years ago you couldn't convince me with a stick that I'd need any of this help. Sometimes it just sorta sneaks up on ya. I mean, who can figure?

BOB:

Yeah, the money they give could help them, or their family? And, something else, a lotta times it's just plain tough to find these people. They're on vacation, or they work a different shift...

BERNICE:

... or they're hiding from you. I get that all the time. But, y'know, I never could figure out why you had these drives during the summer vacation months. I had to come in all the way from my summer spot at Greenlake just to be here...

BOB:

Yeah. It's not easy. So, ya just get tired, and you give up sometimes...

BERNICE:

Yep. But, lemme tell ya, if you've been doing all that canvassing, and going to those meetings and training and events for "lotts a lotts a" years, well, my hat's off to ya, *all* of ya. Ear muffs, too. I think it takes an awful lot of energy to do this stuff, and y'all got real jobs, too, right? Sorta?

(get response)

Tell you what, I couldn't do it. But, then again, I've got all this neat B.E.G.N.F. stuff I can sell ya...

BOB:

Yeah, hey, how'd you *get* that stuff?

BERNICE:

I asked.

BOB:

Asked? You just asked? And they gave it to you? Just up and gave it to you, 'cause you asked? Aw, jeez, that's easy.

BERNICE *(pulls arm out of cart)*:

Yep. You'll never get without asking. There's a lesson in that, Robert Bob. Ya gotta ask. Now, that doesn't mean you beat 'em over the head, or ya twist their arm, but you do gotta ask. Even if you're darn sure they're gonna say no, it never hurts to ask. Now, what else you got going here today, huh? Any boxes of souvenirs I can get my hands on... I heard back in the kitchen there that all the

leftover food was going to some place... Oh, I forgot the name, but don't you people be stuffing your pockets with this stuff, okay? There, now, where were we?

BOB:

Well, we've got some B.E.G.N.F. business to discuss, here...

BERNICE:

Oh, so you're gonna be providing our entertainment, one of those boring speeches? Are you qualified to do that, Robert Bob? Are you wearing a tie under that shirt I want for the museum?

BOB:

Yes. I mean, no, they're not boring, the speeches, I mean, they're... *informative. Inspiring. Uplifting.* So if you'll just shove off and take your cart...

BERNICE:

Hey, hey, not so fast. If we're gonna be partners in this museum deal, I'm thinking I got to keep an eye on you. So, let me help out, here, and I'll just stay a while afterwards and see if there're any of those great cups left over, y'know. And I really want your T-shirt. What're you doing?

Bob goes over to overhead projector, picks up viewfoils and material on cart. Bernice "meets" him there.

BOB:

Well, we got viewfoils and I'm gonna speak about...

BERNICE:

Viewfoils? Why viewfoils?

BOB:

Well, 'cause this is a meeting. We gotta have viewfoils.

Bernice grabs viewfoils out of Bob's hands, looks at them, and throws them all over the place. Bob runs around picking them up off the floor. Bernice turns to Bob assertively.

BERNICE:

Yeah, yeah, viewfoils and acronyms. How'd I know where I was? Well, I'll take care of those "viewfoils", what the rest of the world calls overhead transparencies, and you just stay up there blabbing away... What's first?

Bob hands Bernice the viewfoils. She looks at them, places them on projector as Bob calls for them.

BOB:

The Intro.

BERNICE:

Yeah, okay, so here we go... Intro. So what're you going to say?

BOB:
That this is the intro.

She tosses viewfoil, places next agenda on projector upside down & backwards (so she can read it but audience can't).

BERNICE:
Oh, good. I'm sure glad we had that little discussion, Robert Bob. What's next, let's see, this looks like an agenda...

BOB:
Hey, can you turn it around?

BERNICE:
Yep.

BOB:
No, turn it around. It's upside down.

BERNICE:
I can read it.

She reads it, tosses as she continues doing through scene.

BERNICE:
Okay, so what's this, this "Org" thing?

BOB:
Organization chart. That's who does what, you know, who runs what and who gets to be boss over who...

BERNICE:
So, this fella at the top, he's the Grand Kahuna, the Premiere Pooh-bah?

BOB:
Uh, well, yes.

BERNICE:
O-o-o-o-o-o-o. Where is he?

BOB:
Uh, right here.

BERNICE:
O-o-o-o-o-o-o. Pleased to meet you, Mr. Grand Kahuna. I hope you know I didn't mean you when I made that crack about boring speeches, don't ya? Good, good.

So she continues to handle viewfoils/overhead transparencies while he talks. Humor, humor, humor. Maybe she takes the instructions too literally, he gets frustrated, but of course she "wins" or is "right" or prevails.

- Intro
- Agenda
- Organization Chart
- Mission Statement

- Goals
- Target: 17 Million
- 1991 Objectives: actuals & projections
- Schedule
- the ?: Go Forth and ASK!

BERNICE:

So, is that it? You got anything else going?

BOB:

Actually, yeah, we have the great privilege and honor to present a trophy.

The B.E.G.N.F. designated award/trophy presenter gets up, prepares for a few seconds, asks where trophy is. Bernice pulls the award out of her cart and describes it as Bob describes the one he "lost."

BERNICE:

Is it a tall thing, oh, about yay big?

BOB:

Yes, where is it, oh, jeez, where did I put it?

BERNICE:

Kinda gold colored, with an inscription and all? Looks real important? Like it really is a big deal, a real honor?

BOB:

Yes, yes, yes, it's VERY important, and it really is a GREAT honor... Please don't bother me until I find it.

BERNICE:

It's on that wood base, real nice looking thing?

BOB:

YES!

BERNICE:

What'll you trade me for it?

BOB:

ExCUSE ME!?!?

BERNICE:

What'll you trade me for it? It's, let's see, right here in my cart... This it?

BOB:

Yes, yes, YES!

BERNICE:

Hold on a second, there, Robert Bob. Now, if you can somehow get a copy of this, or at least a real nice color photograph of it with...

(reads trophy, can't make it out)

... what's-his-name for the museum, well, I'll let you have it back. Deal?

BOB:
Yeah, it's a deal, it's a deal. Now gimme my...

BERNICE:
Our.

BOB:
Our trophy back.

THE END