

## IN TRIBUTE

Eric Jenett, PMI Founder  
Engineer, Project Manager, Professional Leader  
1923 - 2011



Eric Jenett, PMP, PMI Fellow and co-founder of the Project Management Institute (PMI) passed away in Houston, Texas on 20 October 2011. Eric died at the age of 88 after a lifetime of being a great dad to his two sons Bruce and Jon, loving husband to his first wife of 59 years Dorothy (mother of Bruce and Jon, and who predeceased him in 2003), and loving husband to his wife Jeanne, who brought so much fun, love, and caring to his later years. He will also be remembered with fondness by many in the engineering and business world where he mentored and guided people in the arts of project management and life in general. Mr. Jenett was born August 11, 1923 in Yonkers, New York. He served as an officer in the Army Air Corps in WW II.

After earning his Master's Degree in Chemical Engineering from Columbia University, Mr. Jenett spent the majority of his career with Brown & Root Corporation, now Kellogg, Brown & Root in Houston. He retired in 1989 as Corporate Vice President having spent over 55 years working in project environments. He was a member of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers for over 40 years and was a registered engineer in Texas until his retirement. During his career, Mr. Jenett had primary project management responsibility for a wide variety of major chemical engineering projects in the US and abroad, including Europe, Iraq and Egypt. He was proud of the fact that he had started, executed and closed out every project on which he had management responsibilities.

Mr. Jenett's knowledge was not limited to the technical; he was widely recognized and respected for his keen awareness of the human aspects of Project Management. He

wrote and lectured on both technical and project management topics and authored over 20 professional papers and handbook contributions. Only partially in jest, Mr. Jenett once described his lifetime goal and guiding principle as being: “to hunt down and eradicate the existence, acceptance and practice of the project management paradigm that says, in effect; ‘the project manager operates to solve the problems of today by tomorrow, applying the techniques of yesterday.’”

Mr. Jenett was one of the founders of the Project Management Institute, the largest and oldest professional accreditation organization for project managers and is listed as member number 3. PMI now numbers over 350,000 professional members worldwide. He was PMI President in 1971, Chairman of the PMI Board of Directors in 1972, and PMI Secretary during 1975-76. He was also instrumental in founding the Houston Chapter of PMI, the first ever established and served as both President and Chair. He also helped organize PMI's first regional seminar in 1976, which evolved into the annual PMI Seminar/Symposium and present day PMI Global Congresses. He was honored by PMI with a Distinguished Contribution award and a designation as a PMI Fellow. PMI's “Eric Jenett Project Management Excellence Award” is presented in his honor annually.

Mr. Jenett was a very active member of the Brown & Root Retirees Association (BRR), having served as President numerous times and was to be the 2012 President. He took great pleasure in maintaining friendships with fellow retirees at numerous events.

Mr. Jenett had lived at Clarewood House Retirement Community in Houston since 2001 and was a very active member of the community there. He often expressed his deep appreciation and warm feelings for Clarewood House, his neighbors and the employees he encountered there. He is survived by his loving wife Jeanne, his sons Bruce and Jon and their wives Nola E. Masterson and Molly D. Jenett and his grandchildren Willoughby, Benjamin, Kelly Jenett (Noack), Meredyth Masterson and Jaime Jenett and her partner Laura Fitch, and one great-grandchild, Simon Lev Fitch-Jenett. In addition Mr. Jenett leaves a large and loving extended family and an eclectic group of friends and colleagues. Mr. Jenett enjoyed a very full and rewarding life largely because of his loving family and friends and his keen interest in people.

A Memorial Service Celebrating Eric Jenett's life was held in The Chapel at Clarewood House on Friday, November 11, 2011 with Chaplain Thomas Hill Officiating. Memorial contributions may be made to the Clarewood House Charitable Trust for Resident Assistance, 7400 Clarewood Drive, Houston, Texas 77036.

*The above official obituary was published in the Houston Chronicle newspaper on Sunday, 6 November 2011*



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### Tributes from Colleagues and Friends

Tributes to Eric Jenett from **James Snyder**, PMI Founder, and **Beth Partleton**, Chair of the PMI Board of Directors, were delivered at the PMI 2011 Awards Ceremony on 22 October 2011 in Grapevine, Texas, USA – to listen, go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3y9Mwptlo0>.

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Eric was a true gentleman, a devoted family man, a proud father of his sons Jon and Bruce and grandfather of their offspring, and dedicated to his chosen professions of chemical engineering and project management. He was a beloved mentor to many men and women throughout his long career, especially in the field of project management. Those of us who had the pleasure of knowing and working with him are saddened by his coming to the end of this life, and we will continue to remember his many contributions to our lives and to the development and spreading of good practices in the project management discipline throughout the world.



*Here is a photo from many years ago – from left to right: Eric, myself, US Army Col Parker, Dorothy Jenett (Eric's wife), 2<sup>nd</sup> PMI Symposium, Houston, Texas, USA 1971*

**Russell D. Archibald**, Fellow PMI, PMP, PMI Member No. 6  
Honorary Fellow APM/IPMA,  
San Miguel de Allende, Mexico



*Photo: PMI Fellows Jim O'Brien, Eric Jenett, J. Gordon Davis, Russ Archibald  
Chicago, 2008; photo courtesy of Russ Archibald*

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So sorry to hear of Eric Jenett's passing! He was a wise and influential PM. Shortly after I became Director of Education Services in 1987, Eric introduced himself and for the next 10 years he regularly made inputs to the Education Committee that I nurtured for inputs from the profession for focus and educational offerings. He was a grand person who knew his business and shared his wisdom with the contributors we knew. Having dinner at the The Three Three Three's with Founders: him, Russ & Jim was an experience I often savor.

**Elvin Isgrig**, PMI Fellow  
Colonel USAF Retired  
Senior Lecturer Emeritus  
North Dakota State University  
North Dakota, USA

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My memories of Eric Jenett go back at least 30 years, when I first became involved in PMI leadership on the international level. I saw Eric as our moral compass. He never failed to challenge our thinking and methods, and always in such a way as to gain our collective respect. It is exceptionally heartwarming to read all of the wonderful memories and testimonies from his colleagues. We all looked up to Eric and recognized him not only as a founder, but as the foundation of our profession.

During my years on the PMI Board, I could count on an occasional "lecture" from Eric to "set me straight". I never discounted his admonitions or advice.

David hit it on the nail head. "The project management professional world has lost a towering figure and pioneer."

**Harvey Levine**

PMI Fellow

Past President & Chair, PMI  
San Diego, California, USA

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Thank you for the sad news about the passing of Eric Jenett. Unfortunately, I was personally acquainted with him only a short time. However, this was enough to understand the scope and enlarge this remarkable man. I would like to add my voice of sorrow, sadness, and I would like to express deep condolences to his family, friends and colleagues among whom he was deeply loved and appreciated. It is a heavy loss for the entire professional community.

**Vladimir Voropajev**

Founder, Russian Project Management Association SOVNET  
Moscow, Russia

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Thank you for letting us know about Eric Jenett. I have substantial personal reasons to be thankful to him. I initially met Eric at my first PMI Seminar/Symposium in San Francisco in 1988, where we sat next to one another in a full day workshop on the PMBOK. For some reason or other, he very actively pushed me to undertake two ongoing assignments from this workshop, which eventually led to my being heavily involved with PMI, and thence with the wider project management community. If it had not been for Eric's initial impetus and ongoing encouragement, I probably would have missed out on these very rewarding involvements.

So, in addition to joining others in saluting Eric's great contributions to PMI and project management at large, I record with gratitude his contribution to me personally.

Best regards

**Alan Stretton, PhD (Hon)**

Fellow, Australian Project Management Association  
Sydney, Australia

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I first met Eric in Vancouver in 1994, when I was visiting the PMI Conference as the National President of the AIPM. Eric made a special point of introducing himself and we regularly kept contact and enjoyed our annual get-togethers when we were able to both

attend the PMI Global Congress's, and of the many private dinners many of us had together over the years.

Although Eric's intellect, experience and quick humour will be sorely missed, we will all remember and respect his enormous contributions to project management. Those of us who had the pleasure of associating with him will always treasure the memory.

There is perhaps an inevitability we all have to face, but there are memories and regards none of us will ever lose.

My fondest memories to Eric and best regards to all of you

**Brian Kooyman**

Fellow & Past Chair

Australian Project Management Association

Sydney, Australia

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Eric was planning to attend the PMI Awards Ceremony in Dallas on Saturday, 22 October, and was deeply missed by many people who were planning to join him for dinner afterwards.

Thank you to Jim Snyder for delivering such a fine tribute to Eric and for shifting the focus of the evening from sadness to joy, by sharing some of his fondest memories and encouraging others to do the same.

I am truly blessed to have known Eric. He was a wonderful mentor and friend.

99% of the time he was full of encouragement and support. Once in a while, he would give me a piece of his mind, if he felt that I messed up. He had a wonderful knack for delivering a firm message with a loving tone.

Members of the former PMI Standards Committee had an in joke about roller coasters (ask Bruce Rodrigues about this next time you see him). From time to time he would send us an article about a new roller coaster and challenge us to "take the plunge." He made it personal and special for each of us.

I have tremendous respect and admiration for Eric and will always treasure the time he spent with me.

**Debbie O'Bray, PMI Fellow**

Former Chair of the Board of Directors, PMI

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

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We all mourn the death of Eric Jenett.

I met him at the very early meetings of PMI when it was finding it's feet. I remember particularly Boston and Toronto. We became friends. I don't know why he took any notice of me but I was very grateful that he did. He was so experienced in what we were only then beginning to call project management and he had done it so many times in so many situations. We were friends for many years until now when he has been taken from us.

His wife Dot and my wife Diana became friends as a result of our friendship. Until he died he sent me memorable emails every week. I shall miss them.

My most vivid memory of Eric will be of when, at least twenty five years ago, I put on a project management course at the University of Texas at Austin in collaboration with David Ashley. The customers were all young men making their way in project management in the Texas oil industry - except Eric, sitting at the front who already knew it all. Seriously daunting. But fortunately, the course went well. I valued highly his contributions to the discussions building on his well observed experience and he, to my surprise, seemed to value the new things I was offering to the course.

We may not see his like again.

**Dr Martin Barnes**

President, The Association for Project Management  
Cornnbrash Hous, Kirtlington  
Oxfordshire, United Kingdom

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This is terribly sad news indeed. I am shocked and dismayed. Eric was a deep thinker and had a masterful grasp of project management fundamentals. He and I exchanged concepts and thoughts from time to time and, in so doing, he expanded my understanding enormously. Eric will be sorely missed.

**R. Max Wideman**

PMI Fellow  
Former President & Chair of the Board, PMI  
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

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This is very sad news for our community, and I have a special thought for his wife and his family.

Eric was a real character and I admired him for what he was doing and for the leadership he expressed, for his kindness to newcomers in the business.

I deeply regret his passing.

**Gilles Caupin**

Former President & Chair  
International Project Management Association (IPMA)  
Treuzy, Levelay, FRANCE

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He always instilled the spirit of doing good for the community at large beyond financial interest. That has inspired me a lot.

He will always be remembered for many years to come.

**Adesh Jain**

Founder & Honorary President  
Project Management Associates (PMA)  
Former President & Chair, IPMA  
New Delhi, India

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I am extremely sorry for the passing away of Eric Jenett.

Coming from the same industry branch, global engineering and construction, Eric has been my mentor since I met him for the first time at PMI Philadelphia in 1984. Annually, meeting with him and reporting to him how his former colleague companies in Japan (he knew very well) are doing at PMI North America Congress has helped me keep afloat in the global PM community.

May his soul rest in peace in the land of the Republic of Texas which is my home away home in America.

Sincerely

**Hiroshi Tanaka**

Founder & President  
Project Management Association of Japan (PMAJ)  
Member, PMI and PMI Houston Chapter  
Tokyo, Japan

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Eric was my mentor on many aspects of Project Management from day one of PMI from the first conference in Atlanta. More recently he had me on his mailing list of interesting

E-mail features and pictures. I loved the picture from his second wedding with both parties using walkers. That is the way to go!

We also had both worked in Iraq in the 1970s. He was very firm about keeping PMI together, while I felt we needed to cater a bit to various types of projects and groups. He was however always willing to debate the issues.

He was a good friend and we will miss him.

**Bob Youker**, PMI member #34  
Bethesda, Maryland, USA

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Eric was always a formidable force. I'm confident that his photo is in Webster's Dictionary next to the word 'irascible'. But that edginess and stubborn insistence on his viewpoint being heard only served to assure that no one tried to oversimplify his ideas or the project management profession in all its complexity. Eric knew that no process operates out of its context, and continually asked the hard questions that helped to assure that project management remained meaningful and robust.

**Marge Comb**  
Former Member, PMI Board of Directors  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA

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I first met Eric Jenett at a PMI gathering in 1975; at that time PMI was just 6 years old and I had already been a member of PMI for 3 years. After that time we continued to meet yearly at symposiums and later at PMI Congresses. In 2009 Eric joined me and 150 others on the PMI Seminar @ Sea IV event, an education cruise started by PMICLG ([www.pmiclg.org](http://www.pmiclg.org)). Since he lived in Houston, we stayed in contact on a monthly phone call up until just two weeks ago.

Eric was planning to attend the 2011 PMI Congress right up to the last minute. Under doctors orders Eric stayed at home in Houston, and passed away on October 20th. A great person and one all PMI'ers should be thankful for.

On Friday, October 21, 2011, I met with executives of the PMI Educational Foundation to start the Eric Jenett Education Scholarship. Fundraising for the endowment has now been started. This scholarship will be for professional development to advance the PMI certification programs, as Eric is recognized as PMP #1, starting with the PMP program and following up with all PMI certifications in due time.

The PMI Educational Foundation will begin accepting donations for this worthwhile initiative soon. For more information, contact either AJ Collier at +1-281-991-1041 or at

[ajc02@earthlink.com](mailto:ajc02@earthlink.com); or Debra Miersma at +1-413-329-9264 or at [dmiersma10@nycap.rr.com](mailto:dmiersma10@nycap.rr.com).

### **AJ Collier**

Past President, PMI Clear Lake Galveston Chapter  
Clear Lake, Texas, USA

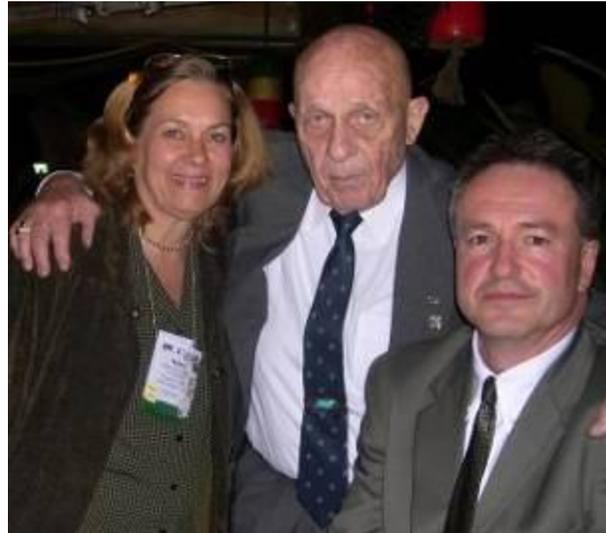
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It is sad to think Eric Jenett will not be in our company when we meet in the future. He was intensely bright and wise as well, often focused on the conversations until he saw the need to say something. Then he made his statement, a contribution all of us would value and think about. He was energetic, fair and involved. And as I was one of the few female project managers in my circles, I was gratified to find he always treated me as a colleague, not a special category of manager. We will think of him often, and listen for the lessons he taught us—they are still in our own memory.

Thanks Eric for the role model you always were and still will be.

**Helen Cooke**, PMP, PMI Fellow,  
VP-Consulting Services,  
OPM Mentors Chicago & Sydney.

*Photo: Helen Cooke, Eric Jenett, David Pells, PMI Global Congress North America 2005, Anaheim, California, USA; photo courtesy of David Pells*



Sharing the first name with a heavyweight like Eric Jenett has led to funny situations. I remember the leadership meeting in 1997 in Dallas where PMI had to make very dramatic decisions about the future of the PMP-certification program and the governance of PMI. At one point, the atmosphere got really tense when the whole process (voting on small, very directed questions without any possibility to influence procedures) was being questioned. We decided to stick with the flawed process anyways, but the results of the successive votes started to create a weird package of micro-decisions without any eye for the whole. At one point, I stood up and listed all the inconsistencies between the micro-decisions that we had taken. At the end of the day, the facilitator, suggested that a small working group would be formed to look at the whole package and requested that “Eric” be part of that group, and he immediately made it more specific by changing that into “Eric Jenett” since he did not know the little, unknown guy in the back of the hall. Eric Jenett took the confusion gracefully and

willingly participated in that group, letting me off the hook for a great night out in Dallas with other youthful members of the leadership. Of course, one person had noticed the name confusion and approached me to get the exact list of inconsistencies from me that the working group needed to work on among other things. The next day the working group presented more follow up questions that, indeed, made the entire undertaking wholesome and meaningful.

I have never thanked Eric Jenett for this work that I should have done: Eric, thank you; you have been one of the rocks on which PMI was built!

**Eric Uyttewaal, PMP,**  
Microsoft MVP for Project  
President ProjectPro Corp.  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

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Few words indicate more on someone's resume' than the word "FOUNDER". It signifies that someone decided to give birth to an idea. This is especially true when only 5 individuals came together to create the seed corn for a global support community like PMI. Eric carried that moniker all of his life. His courage and willingness to team up with others like him, led to an organization with impact, service, and fellowship beyond our wildest imaginations. I only had the privilege of "knowing" him personally for a little over 8 years, and yet he "got to me", big time. The one thing he reminded me of was the willingness to act on one's belief, and to do so with the thought of adding value to the greater good, not for any one group, or for any one person. This principle is powerful to me. In the last two years of my career at PMI, I had the opportunity to talk to him on several occasions about that principle. His candor and "descriptive language" always made me smile. And he never ceased to amaze me how he could so quickly cut through the chaos and maze of opinions, and get to the "greater good" for PM and our community. I will consider that opportunity as part of the best experiences of my tenure at PMI, and one of the best tutoring in my career. For his legacy, I hope we never forget that PMI is nothing without its community of professionals, and that we are in business of providing value to the greater good. Eric, thanks for that gift.

**Gregory Balestrero**  
Former President & CEO  
Project Management Institute (PMI®)  
Maryland, USA

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Eric Jenett was a "generally" quiet and larger-than-life individual that was always a professional. If he favored you with the honor of being with you or speaking with you then you were truly blessed. You became better, based upon the knowledge you gained from Eric - from his understanding of the basic truths of project management, to the applications of project management, to the understanding of the people aspect of

life, to the way a gentleman and a professional acted. Eric Jenett was a leader and a mentor. He was and will always be more than what we can try to recall. His counsel and presence will be missed.

**Fred Arnold**, PMI Fellow  
Past Member, PMI Board of Directors  
Pittsburgh, PA, USA

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Eric was an amazing man. I remember introducing several of my friends to him at the Atlanta Congress. He challenged us as a group and individually. He asked me “if you were a Baptist minister in South America would you feel the need to save the Catholics?” He was making the point that passion is great but you have to pick your targets (victims?) carefully. He kept several of us on our toes for an hour or two and it was impossible to believe that he was in his mid 80’s. He remained passionate about Project Management to the end. He was expecting to make the Dallas Congress this year and his doctor said no at the last minute.

I was so impressed by Eric’s intellect (IQ>200 on a bad day), his commonsense, honesty and kindness. I asked him late one night about his religious views. He answered proudly that he was agnostic. He had thought and read about it a great deal. I hope by now he has found the answers he sought and that they are to his liking.

We owe so much to the Founders. They and PMI changed my life for the better and I know many others who feel the same.

**Frank Walker**  
Past President, PMI Puget Sound Chapter  
Pennsylvania, USA



*Photo of Eric Jenett on right with Charles Jones, PMI Global Congress North America 2007, Atlanta, Georgia, USA – 7 October 2007. Photo courtesy of Frank Walker.*

In addition to being a strong advocate for project management, Eric was a good friend and professional colleague. He gave wise counsel in project management as well as life situations to me -- and I'm certain to others. He could think through situations to arrive at the correct solutions. His guidance was valuable for all project management practitioners.

Eric will be remembered for his long-term contributions to project management and the Project Management Institute. As one of the first officers and founding fathers of PMI, he never relented in his efforts to continue to promote PMI and project management. He shall be sorely missed when the roll is called at future PMI meetings. Memories of Eric's work will have long lasting application to the professionalism of project management.

### **Lew Ireland**

Fellow and Former President of PMI  
Founder & Past President, ASAPM  
Tennessee, USA

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When I took over the position of PMI's volunteer Director of Certification in 1990, I found myself immediately embroiled in political controversies regarding such things as who could be eligible to be a PMP, why we needed to reduce the exam pass rate to only 10% of exam-takers, why we should abandon a multiple choice exam format, and other issues of this ilk. I was surprised at the level of intensity of people's feelings about PMP certification issues. On one occasion, I actually had a prominent PMI member grab me by the lapels of my suit jacket and shake me!. So when I first encountered Eric Jenett – the fabled PMP #1 – I braced myself for a barrage of criticisms and suggestions. Instead he looked at me for a while without saying a word, then put his hand on my arm. He then told me in his gruff twang: "Do what it takes to make this the best certification program in the world." That was it. No complaints. No detailed suggestions. Simply, "Do a good job."

Over the years, I enjoyed attending meetings with Eric, because before a meeting ended, he would often speak his mind. He was always frank and fair and his arguments well-reasoned. Whether I agreed with his points or not, I was always impressed by his obvious dedication to serving the interests of PMI. My last encounter with Eric was at the 2010 Global Congress in Washington, DC. My last words to him were: "We'll see you at next year's Congress." He answered, "You bet." Sadly, he didn't make it.

We miss you, Eric!

**J. Davidson Frame**, PhD, PMP, PMI Fellow  
Academic Dean  
University of Management and Technology  
Arlington, Virginia, USA

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*Eric Jenett, courtesy of PMI*

Very sorry to hear this news.

My very first impressions of PMI on other than a local basis was through Eric. As practitioners, we had a lot in common. He was my mentor all during my time in PMI's leadership. I could always count on his wise counsel.

He and Dean Martin encouraged and supported me as a PMI member and as a project manager without any formal education. With his and Dean's encouragement I took and passed the PMP exam (May 1986); I appreciated his perspective in managing projects and working in PMI with a view as a practitioner rather than as a consultant. He was honestly supportive.

I enjoyed seeing him and Dot (until her passing) at our annual meetings where they both endured travel hardships in order to attend. I will miss him very much.

**Ron Waller**, PMP, FPMI, CEM  
Past President & Chair, PMI  
Principal Consultant, Sigma Projects Group  
Eagle River, Wisconsin, USA  
[www.sigmaprojects.com](http://www.sigmaprojects.com)

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Eric. In a nutshell his name said it all to me. Concise, blunt, just to the point! He once said to me that I could conquer anything and to not be afraid. I think he lived that way and was a firm believer in that philosophy.

Eric was so sharp and willing to share. He did not pull punches. I remember one of my first encounters with him was a session at the old Seminar & Symposia format with a first time speaker that Eric shredded but with a wry smile. I asked him why he was so hard on the speaker. He countered with the question, “Was I?” However, again with that wry smile, he then responded that the person probably learned a great deal from his talk. He saw himself as mentoring through questioning. Many folks were so honored to have him in the audience, they did not care that he saw issues differently. It was to brag that Eric Jenett attended your talk.

I loved one-on-one time where I could use him as a sounding board. He never once attacked me, but listened, questioned, and either reaffirmed or gently moved me in another direction. And of course the hug at the end of the talk made it all so very worth the time.

My time with Eric and Dorothy were the best. Dorothy was a desert first woman, and I mean desert first. Yes, she would have some dinner also, but oh the desert. She just adored Eric. She often was found wrapped in her fur coat sitting in her wheelchair looking up with a lovely smile at him. My they were a couple. I have special memories of them that I share in private with folks that send us all laughing in torrents of giggles. To this day, I miss my daily quota of funny or thought-provoking emails. I would share with him also. Yes, there were the emails I would delete because well Eric was all about Texas and being a conservative to the hilt. I think it was one area where balance of view played no part for him. But it made Eric well Eric.

I miss my dear friend for that is what he was—my dear friend.

**Rebecca Winston, JD, PMI Fellow**

Past Chair, PMI Board of Directors  
Idaho, USA

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I wanted to write and share a couple thoughts about Eric for your memorial. I am saddened by his passing but cherish the times I had to interact him. Eric was dedicated to the profession and was always generous with his time, wisdom and opinions with new, up and coming, as well as more seasoned project managers. He was always honest and direct,. no mincing of words or worrying about any of the latest “trends”.

As a professional - he was involved in the profession with his whole heart and soul. I always enjoyed the times I got to catch up and talk and laugh with him and his lovely wife. As a man he was a world class flirt who could “charm the socks off of a snake”.

All the best and take good care!

**Cathy Tonne, PMP**

Senior Business Leader, Client Services, Program Office, Visa, Inc.,

Former PMI Northern California Chapter Officer  
Livermore, California, USA

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I met Eric Jenett in person only in 2008 but long before that I exchanged a couple of letters with him that helped me to build my path into Project Management. He never left any of my questions unanswered and he has stimulated me to want more, at all times. He once told me that one of the most challenging things for PMI being such a big association today is the difficulty of reinventing itself.

He then warned me that some of my findings in Project Management – such as the application of Russian Resource Critical Path / Success Driven Project Management Methodology – could take decades to be brought to PMBOK, even if it would be an outstanding methodology with effective results in Project Management seen in many parts of the world. Thanks to his advice for being patient and the continuous support of another PMI Fellow, Russell Archibald, I kept challenging the common knowledge found in the PMBOK Guide and I kept seeking the integration of such best practices as the essentials of Russian findings in Project Management.

I was with Mr. Jenett in person during a PMI COS (College of Scheduling) event in Chicago where I presented a paper introduced by Russell Archibald – an early promoter of the Russian techniques and concluded by Vladimir Liberzon, the actual architect of such fantastic methodology. From that date, I never started any project management course without bringing his picture to the class and getting people to know how far he has gone from the start of our profession to the initiation of PMI and all his legacy after that.

I am very proud that a year after meeting him in person I was lucky enough to get an award from PMI created in his honor, The Eric Jenett Project Management Excellence Award. I hope I can always help keep his memory alive to all project managers and wanna-bees!

**Peter Mello**, PMP, SpS, PMI-SP

Recipient of PMI Best of the Best 2009 – Eric Jenett Project Management Excellence Award - Brasilia, Brazil

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It was my privilege to meet Eric during the PMI formation years of 1964 – 1969. Jim Snyder introduced us and he valued highly Eric's unusual perspective on the problems encountered by those who were seeking to make Project Management a clearly identified profession that was distinct in its focus and approaches. Eric and I were often on opposite sides of discussions as to how PMI and the PM profession should grow and develop its unique body of knowledge and methodology. That was more helpful to me than if we had agreed upon most issues. More often than I would care to admit, his position on such issues turned out to have hidden merit. The early emphasis on

Chapters was one of those issues. While I thought that we should concentrate on growing the parent organization first, he was a strong early advocate of Chapters. He saw this as the basis of having PM people rubbing shoulders on a regular basis with others who were beginning to identify themselves with this unique profession. In a similar manner, Eric promoted the idea of PMP registration, while I thought the timing was premature. The phenomenal growth of the PMP certification program was another testimony to his foresight. Eric's designation as PMP # 1 was appropriate on many levels.

Eric put his unique stamp on PMI. All of us are blessed by his insights and his devotion to PMI.

**J. Gordon Davis, Ph.D.**  
PMI Fellow  
CASCAD-e Systems, LLC  
Atlanta, Georgia, USA

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The holder of many professional awards and honors and one of the five co-founders of the Project Management Institute, Eric Jenett, PE, PMI Fellow, was both a visionary and a practical "hands on" leader in the field of project management. Because of these qualities, I remember him as an exceptional mentor and friend, whose vitality and zest for his profession inspired me and many others. Number one in many things, when the Project Management Institute (PMI) instituted the Project Management Professional Certification Program, Eric signed up, took the test, and passed of course. Eric did not care about race or gender, he only looked for quality, and he inspired me to serve in various leadership positions in PMI - first as Regional Vice President, then President and Chairman of the PMI Board. A real professional and a warm and witty man who loved his family and valued his friends, Eric is an icon who will be sorely missed.

**Mary Devon O'Brien, PMI Fellow**  
Former PMI President & Chair of Board of Directors  
New Jersey, USA

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A Tribute to a Giant—Eric Jenett, PMP # 1

Once in a great while, a giant enters your life. Such is the case of my friendship and professional association with Eric Jenett.

While he was nearly 20 years my senior, Eric always seemed to be my equal in terms of age and he certainly could "run circles around me" professionally and intellectually. Yet he never talked down to me and was always interested in my opinion and perspective on things.

I first met Eric through a mutual friend and colleague, Dr. David Cleland, and it was at the Pittsburg, PA, Project Management Institute Seminars and Symposium, probably about 20 years ago. I had the privilege of having dinner with Eric and Dave and some other PMI icons during that event, and considered Eric an immediate friend. He sincerely took interest in me and my background, and the value that I could add to PMI and to the profession. I, too, was a PMP, but Eric was PMP #1, and truly deserved that honor.

We continued to interact over the years, including the recent PMI Congresses. I was honored to be selected as a PMI Fellow at the PMI Congress in Orlando two years ago, and Eric was one of the first Fellows to welcome me into this prestigious group. Wow! I was now in the same ballpark as Eric! But, as humble as he always was, he welcomed me to the group with total sincerity and real pleasure.

While Eric was not a physical giant, he was a giant of a professional and person. He has left an unequalled mark on the Project Management Institute and on the profession.

With fondest memories of one of the true giants in my life — Eric Jenett, PMP # 1.

**James M. Gallagher**, PMP, PMI Fellow  
Centerville, Ohio, USA

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#### Tribute and Memorial to Eric Jenett

It is difficult to find the right words to describe, honor and remember Eric Jenett. He was such an important person and influence in my life, first as a PMI legend and icon, then as advisor and mentor, and finally as a personal friend.

I read about Eric as PMI founder when I first learned about PMI in 1981, while working in California. I joined the Northern California Chapter of PMI in 1982 and began attending chapter meetings, learning then about Eric's role in getting PMI chapters started in the first place, and as founder of PMI's first chapter in Houston. He was already famous, not only as a PMI founder, past PMI president and chair but also as past president and chair of the PMI Houston Chapter. At that time, the Northern California Chapter was competing with the Houston Chapter on several fronts, in size and with connections to large construction management companies in the USA. The Houston chapter had the support of Brown and Root, thanks to Eric. The Northern California Chapter had Bechtel, Kaiser Engineers (where I worked) and several others involved. It was an exciting time in the life of PMI and in my own career.

In 1987, I finally had an opportunity to meet Eric in person, at the PMI'87 Seminars/Symposia in Milwaukee. It was my first PMI congress; I was young and there to receive the official charter for the Eastern Idaho Chapter, of which I was founder and president. Eric was one of the 'famous' PMI leaders there; I was a peon in the

audience, in awe of these industry and professional leaders, and it seemed that Eric was the most respected of all. As I became more involved in PMI, my awareness and respect for Eric Jenett only grew stronger.

Following the PMI'90 Symposia in Calgary, I was involved in leading the Project Earth initiative, which evolved into PMI's first SIG, the Project Earth SIG in 1992. I was serving as both president of the PMI Dallas Chapter and founding chair of the Project Earth SIG at the time. Eric thought that the Project Earth movement was too "green"; he thought I was a little too far left and he did not support our efforts. As the SIG matured, however, and he saw that we were just trying to promote the use of modern project management on more environmental and sustainable projects, he slowly came around to support us.



By the time that I was elected to the PMI Board in 1994, Eric Jenett was a supporter. Beginning in 1995, with the first Global Project Management Forum at PMI'95 in New Orleans, Eric began to take me under his wing. He became a mentor and advisor, sending memos, articles and later emails to me on a regular basis. He attended each of the Global Forums that I chaired through 1999, offering suggestions and feedback on a wide range of topics.

*Photo: David Pells with Dorothy and Eric Jenett, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA;*

*October 1995.*

After I became a PMI Fellow in 1999, Eric began to copy me on his emails to leaders at PMI headquarters and to other Fellows on a regular basis. Even over the last dozen years, Eric took great interest in the growth and evolution of PMI, often sending congratulations, criticisms or questions to PMI headquarters whenever some big issue arose. In my opinion, Eric Jenett was one of the most respected, influential and powerful people within PMI and the PM professional world. Along with Jim Snyder, Eric has more influence on PMI leaders, both among the board of directors and staff at PMI headquarters in Pennsylvania, than any other member or past leader. Everyone took his emails, comments and opinions very seriously, not only out of respect but because they were generally both insightful and correct.

My wife Carla and I were honored to have Eric and his wife Dorothy (Dot, as she was known to family and friends) as guests at our wedding in May 2000. It was a huge honor for me, as they had to drive the long distance up from Houston to be there. He now obviously holds a very special place in our hearts.



*The late Saralee Newell (PMI Fellow), Eric and Dot Jenett, Addison, Texas, May 2000*

PMI and the entire project management profession will miss Eric Jenett. As Jim Snyder said during his eulogy in October at the PMI Global Congress, Eric Jenett had a profound influence on everyone at that big event and on every PMI member around the world. PMI most likely would not exist if it had not been for Eric's passion, hard work (with Jim and a few others) and commitment. To be founder of an organization now numbering more than 350,000 members in over 180 countries, and with even greater influence when considering the organizations and credential holders associated with PMI, is an amazing accomplishment.

Like so many other PMI leaders who knew and were influenced by Eric Jenett, I was very honored and happy to know him. To have gained his respect in return was perhaps the cornerstone of my own career.

My heartfelt and sincere sympathies to Eric's wife Jeanne, who made him happy at the end of his life, and to his sons Jon and Bruce and their families. His children and grandchildren have a true icon and legacy to remember – as do we all!

The project management profession will miss him!

**David L. Pells**, PMI Fellow

Hon Fellow, APM (UK), PMA (India), SOVNET (Russia)

Managing Editor, *PM World Today*

Addison, Texas, USA

**From Eric's son, Jon (after reading the above tributes)**

What a wonderful tribute and thank you so much for this really moving and touching assembly of tributes and for the effort. Thank you also for the warm and caring friendship you and your family showed my dad (and my mom). I began to cry as I read this - not from sadness but from happiness that the warm, caring, funny, crusty guy my dad was is still alive in all those brain cells and memories out there.

For what it's worth, I had a number of opportunities over the last 7-10 years to talk with my dad about PMI. He went through an interesting period of alienation from PMI after he had been retired for a while. His alienation was not ugly or severe, more sad for him - like he felt he had lost a good friend. Partly I think it was from not being actively employed in "the real world" of project management anymore at B&R (and he really did enjoy the nuts and bolts of getting stuff built). I think it was an effort on his part to redefine what his role was, and in that process some of his thoughts turned to his (and perhaps the other founders') "idealization" of PMI as a platform for the "collegial" sharing of project management ideas and best practices, regardless of your particular job function or industry. My dad in this period expressed strongly to me on numerous occasions that he felt PMI and the rewarding of certifications had become...well, not a diploma mill, but maybe a "business" rather than a bunch of collegial engineers helping each other and sharing ideas. He did not buy into my comments that to a 32 year old working to make a career in project management getting that certificate had salary and career mobility benefits

He was also convinced that one key to "the problem with PMI" was a recognition that the "silo-ing" effect of SIG's could ultimately hurt PMI. His thinking was that if project managers from real estate, finance, chemical engineering, electrical engineering, and other disciplines did not recognize they all operated under common project management principles and could learn from each other, then PMI was doomed to be a collection of fiefdoms locked in their exclusionary silos that did not communicate and learn from each other. This was also, I think, what drove his interest in the PMBOK project - the holy grail that would prevent the Tower of Babel. He and I spent quite a bit of time during the late 1990's talking about all this, and at times I think it got him down. In trying to redefine his role (and given his wicked sense of humor) that sometimes reduced him to the role of a "gadfly" buzzing around an organization that he genuinely loved and was proud of but could not relate to.

But then something really magical happened. Without any common prod (that I know of), several key people in the PMI universe (maybe including you, Virgil, the CEO at the time, and Greg Balestrero in recent years) reached out to my dad, made him feel honored, listened to his thoughts with sincerity, and honored what he said (maybe not with agreement). He was slowly drawn back into understanding that although PMI had changed, it recognized and valued him and his contributions. I am convinced that added years to his life, and you and others in PMI should be very proud of that. I want to thank PMI for reaching out to my dad and "bringing him back into the fold" and honoring him.

My mom had a great idea she shared liberally with us - "flowers for the living". If you care for someone and value them, let them know NOW. All that you and others did to honor my dad were the very best flowers for the living.

Thank you to PMI (and you David) for caring, respecting, and honoring my dad. It meant a lot to him and brought him real happiness and professional and personal pride..

Warm regards,

**Jon Jenett, Eric's son**  
California, USA



*Jon, Eric and Bruce Jenett*

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### **Reading at Memorial Service for Eric Jenett on 11 November 2011 by Eric's Grandson, Benjamin Eric Jenett**

When I think of my grandfather Eric, a couple of memories come to mind, the first from when I was a child, and the second just recently. One of the earliest memories I have is from Eric and Dot's living room in Houston. We had just gotten back from a trip to the toy store- and I had wisely purchased some Gak- a gooey, jelly-like substance with colors not found in nature. It could be stretched and squeezed into all sorts of shapes. It could also be ever so delicately dripped onto the bald head of my grandfather, who would tolerate my gasking over and over again. His patience and caring brought me so much joy- and I know pouring neon colored gelatin on his head couldn't have been as enjoyable as he let on.

The more recent memory was when he and Jean visited my parents in southern California, only a couple of months ago. I was building a large, complicated artwork sculpture with my company, and described the construction process and the difficulties we were facing. We had to take apart and then reassemble these giant panels of stainless steel, and the issue was we were building them in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, where it can get quite cold during the winter. He immediately began breaking down the possible problems, analyzing them, and coming up with solutions. He also told me a fascinating story about a project he was managing in Canada- a super tall radio tower, built out of reinforced concrete. Because they had to pour the concrete very slowly during the winter, their pace slowed so much that their calibration was affected by the gradual rotation of the earth as the months passed- and eventually they noticed their tower was taking an unintentional helix shape. He made sure to emphasize to me the importance of the thermal expansion and contraction of the panels- and I assured him our engineers had planned for this. His mind was still sharp- and he was still able to give his grandson the fifth degree, while at the same time taking time carefully explain things and impart his knowledge.

I was lucky enough to be here in Houston for Eric and Jean's wedding, and I am so glad they had each other for the time they did. When I made a toast to them, I told my grandfather something along the lines of "Every Architect secretly wants to be an engineer"...mostly referring to our respective professions. But what I realize is it had less to do with professions, and more to do with spirits. Every person aspires to be great, in whatever they do. And Eric was. He was great in being a project engineer, a husband, a father, and a grandfather.

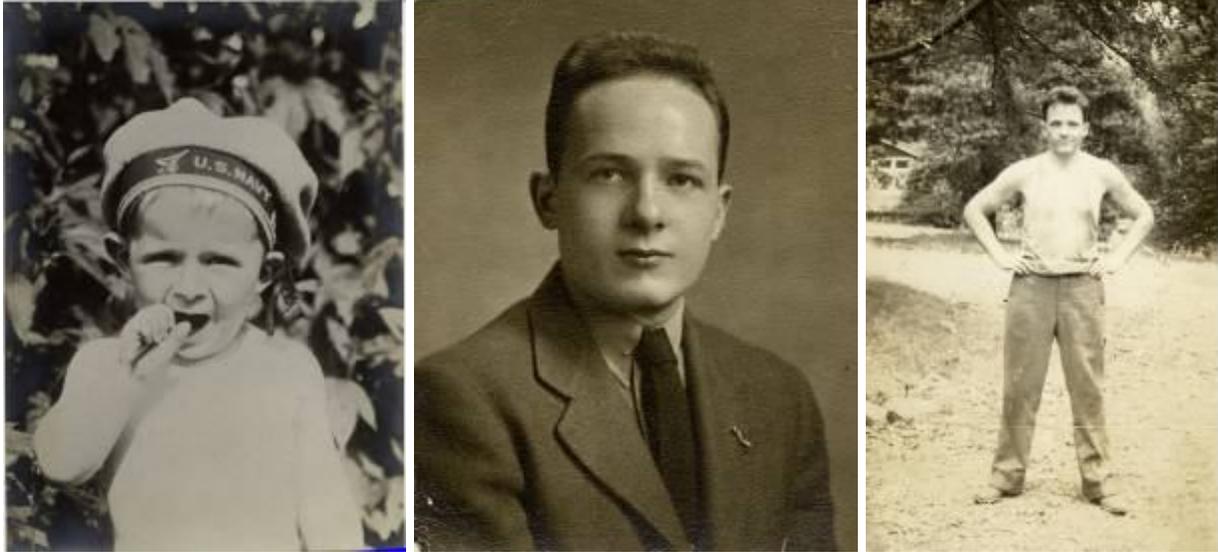
As I aspire to be great in these things as well, and as all of us draw inspiration from Eric's life and accomplishments, I know that his spirit, wisdom, and caring will live on, and it will live on in all of us. I know some day my grandson will be pouring Gak on my head, and I'm sure grandpa will be smiling up in heaven, thinking "what goes around comes around kid!".

## **Benjamin Jenett**

Project Manager  
Ball-Nogues Studio, California  
[www.ball-nogues.com](http://www.ball-nogues.com)

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Photos from Eric's life (courtesy of Jenett family):



*Eric Jenett as a child, young man...*



*... and soldier*



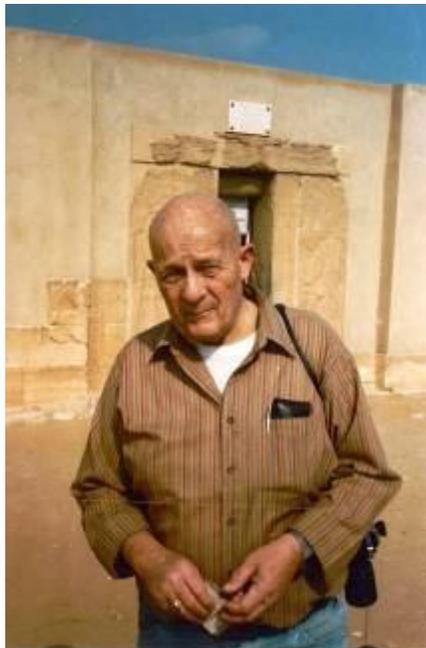
*Eric & Dorothy Jenett – with sons Bruce and Jon*



*Left: On ANIC synthetic rubber plant project, Ravenna, Italy, circa 1957  
Right: Jenett family in Italy, where Eric worked on several projects for B&R*



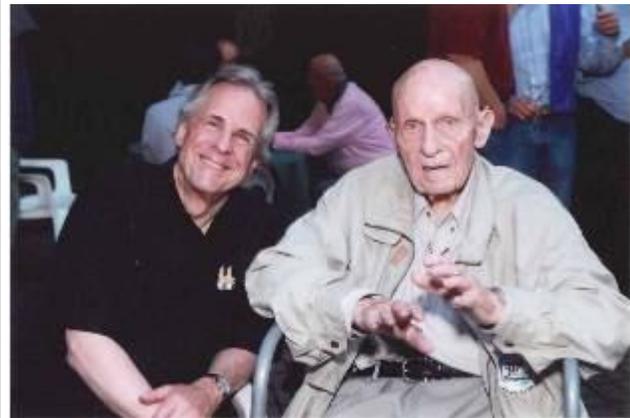
*Dorothy & Eric Jenett – Happily Married for 59 years  
(Eric's beloved wife Dot passed away in 2003)*



*Eric Jenett  
Project Manager, Adventurer, Global Citizen*



*Eric was devoted to his sons, their families and his grandchildren!*



*Eric Jenett - with son Bruce*



*At age 85, Eric found love again!*



*Jeanne & Eric*



*Marriage of Jeanne Dauphinee and Eric Jenett  
Wedding party - July 15, 2009 – Houston, Texas, USA*



*Eric & Jeanne with Jon & Bruce Jenett*



*Eric Jenett with sons Jon & Bruce*



*For the boys: “yeah, and if a bullfrog had wings he wouldn’t bump his ass every time he jumped” – nice try, but that excuse won’t fly!*

*- Eric Jenett*



*Eric Jenett, PMI Founder, PMI Fellow*

*Project Management Professional!*

*Active to the End!*

*(photo courtesy of AJ Collier)*