"Ada-WOW"

Ada's

Window On the World

SIGAda 2000

Sponsored by ACM SIGAda

Welcome to SIGAda 2000, about Ada-WOW

By Hal Hart (TRW), Ada-WOW Editor

Ada-WOW, your daily SIGAda conference newsletter, is now in its second year, modeled on *"WOW"* which has been a tradition at SIGSOFT's International Conference on Software Engineering (ICSE) for years and is anxiously anticipated by attendees every day. Ada-WOW will bring you late breaking "news" stories, interviews with speakers and organizers, thought pieces, and interesting bits of information about the conference, the location, and the current and next generation of Ada software engineering researchers and practitioners. Bear with us as we get the bugs out of newslettering, and try to get our digital camera connected for download by the next issue *Or, better yet, contribute with articles, reviews, picks and pans of local restaurants.*

Seriously, we can always use more Ada-WOW staff help -- write a critique of a tutorial or session you attended, a local restaurant review, a good story you heard during the schmoozing, or you opinion about an issue in the profession of computing. We'll publish everything we can. Or volunteer to help on the production side of an issue. Or if you have a digital camera along and download capability, let us know. You will find us every evening in room 1007 (the <u>*Penthouse Suite*</u>*) of the Sheraton.*

Today's issue starts off with announcements (below) about meetings tonight, an interview with the man most responsible for logistical planning (venue, hotel, food & beverage, etc.), one tutorial review, a small preview of tomorrow, and a little fun via some Top-10 lists.

Local Reps Dinner Tonight

Contuinuing a 15-year tradition at SIGAda conferences and meetings, tonight will be an informal dinner hosted by SIGAda for all organizers and members of Local SIGAda Chapters or other Ada societies, including our international visitors. We also welcome anyone interested in finding out about or potentially starting local Ada events back home.

The Local Reps dinner will be held from approx. <u>5:30-7:00pm</u> tonight in the <u>Penthouse Suite (room 1007)</u> at the Columbia Sheraton.

SIGAda Extended Executive Committee Meeting Tonight

By Currie Colket, Conf. Chair & SIGAda Vice Chair for Meetings & Conferences

The business of SIGAda and planning of future conferences is the responsibility of the 7 elected SIGAda officers, aided by the inputs of working group chairs, chairs of local chapters, the present and next conference committee members, the Ada LETTERS editor, and a couple others. These are the volunteers that keep SIGAda vibrant and power the efforts to make our conferences and other activities happen. This group collectively is the SIGAda Extended Executive Committee (EEC). New volunteers are always sought and are welcome at any time.

Your best near-term opportunity to view or join into EEC business is tonight's EEC meeting from 7pm onwards, in room Lakeview D at the Sheraton.

Weather Forecast

Today (Sunny with some clouds)
High: 14 C (57 F)
Low: 5 C (42 F)

Tomorrow (Chance of showers)
High: 13 C (56 F)
Low: 3 C (38 F)
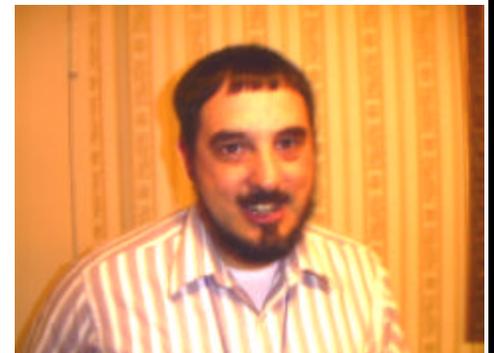
Local Arrangements Chair Rush Kester: An Interview

By Erin Briska
(George Washington University)

In a recent interview with Rush Kester, the Local Arrangements Chair for SIGAda 2000, he expressed his views and opinions on the conference, as well as elaborated on his duties. This year's conference is significant for many reasons, especially the presence of top-notch members of the Ada field coming together and speaking in one place at one time. This is a rare opportunity for many groups of people. This year's conference targets primarily existing members of the Ada field and people who express interest in learning about Ada and its significance. It provides these people with the opportunity to hear top-notch speakers of the Ada community speak over the duration of a week.

As a Local Arrangements Chairperson, Rush Kester has many responsibilities. As he put it, his job is like being "a caterer, a travel agent, an exhibit coordinator, an equipment coordinator, an AV personnel, and a printer" all in one. Without Rush Kester, this year's conference may not have been possible. Starting in October of 1999 Kester began the intricate planning of this conference. He, as well as the other 15 members of this year's committee, began searching for a site for this year's SIGAda conference. The original proposal was a site in Minneapolis, Minnesota. It became obvious to the planners, including Kester, that the weather at this site may be too cold for a November conference. Kester, presently working at John's Hopkins University's Applied Physics Lab, suggested that the APL might be a worthy site for this year's conference. From there the planning continued.

In years past, the SIGAda conference has always been held in a "downtown" area. The conference each year was held in the same place as lodging, in conference rooms provided by the hotel. This year SIGAda's placement is unique. The primary advantage to this year's conference is low expense. Conference rooms in hotels, as Kester explained, are usually high-cost. Every event that has advantages also has disadvantages, though. One disadvantage is transportation between

the hotel and the APL. There are approximately 114 registrants of this year's SIGAda conference, many of whom require transportation. Kester's job was to coordinate this. He had to take into consideration the cost and time involved in transporting this year's registrants. After much consideration and planning, a shuttle service was decided on. Instead of a large bus, a shuttle service resembling an airport shuttle service was implemented. The advantages of a shuttle service consisting of many small vans include faster and more numerous pickups and a more flexible capacity. This was yet another small but crucial step in the planning for this year's conference.

Kester held many positions as this year's Local Arrangements Chairperson, one including a travel agent. The SIGAda conference draws attention nationally and globally each year. Kester had to deal primarily with overseas exhibitors that needed reservations to be made. He would receive an email from an exhibitor and proceed to make airport shuttle and hotel reservations for these people to save them the cost of phone calls and the hassle often involved with reservation making. These emails were a few out of the hundred or more conference-related emails Kester would receive daily, yet he still managed to read and respond to each one.

Kester did get into some heated debates with colleagues during the planning of this conference. The most grief came from Hal Hart and David Harrison. As Kester said, "it was a tie." It boiled down to who was under more stress at the time. Kester would be involved in weeklong heated email debates over certain topics, such as what different publications would look like and shuttle schedules. These debates were all in the spirit of fun, though. They were merely the result of the merging of different views and were resolved quickly. Planning often requires new and diverse views of a particular idea. This contributes to the successfulness of this yearly conference, and will prove to be an important factor of this year's success.

Tutorial SF4: Real Time and Non-Real Time CORBA Programming

By Ron Oliver (The Oliver Academy & SIGAda Vice Chair for Liaison)

Seven years ago I attended a day-long seminar on CORBA (Common Object Request Broker Architecture). I left the seminar in utter disgust. The C programmers were doing it to us again! As near as I could tell the whole CORBA effort, as well-conceived as it was initially, seemed to me like it was being botched by the typical C-world myopia and ignorance.

Several years ago I attended a CORBA presentation by Brad Balfour (currently with Objective Interface Systems, Inc.) and was mildly pleased to learn there had been some significant progress in the evolution of CORBA. But I was still not convinced that CORBA was going anywhere important.

Yesterday I attended Brad's tutorial with the title of this article. I learned a ***great deal***, and I was especially pleased to learn that CORBA has ***finally*** evolved to be a viable, potentially very useful technology.

There is now an approved Real Time CORBA standard, and at least one available implementation. Moreover (and this is the exciting part) many features of Real Time CORBA (but not all) were decided in an entirely reasonable way, consistent with Ada syntax and semantics.

Ada developers will find CORBA development quite natural and easy to understand, though somewhat limited in capabilities. C/C++ developers, for the most part, will find CORBA development to be mysterious.

The Mall in Columbia is within walking distance from the hotel (free roundtrip shuttle service is also available). You'll find everything from Penny's to Nordstrom's. If you're into tools, you won't want to miss Brookstone's ("the Toy Store for Men").

10 Visionaries of the 90's

Last year a well-known web feed *(to be revealed on Thursday)* picked "10 Visionaries" of the 90's, people whose ideas have had a profound impact on computing with influence sure to drive the industry well into the next century. Included are CEOs, engineers, and programmers — all of whom have changed the world. Over the next 3 days WOW will count them down. Feel free to make your own guesses or make bets with your colleagues. Just remember, this is just like Trivial Pursuit: the correct answers are what the authors say they are. Here are the first 3:

10. LINUS TORVALD: Linux and the open-source movement he started as a 21-year-old student.

9. JEFF HAWKINS and DONNA DUBINSKY: Founders of Palm Computing — they know smaller is better.

8. JAMES GOSLING and BILL JOY: Inventor and chief proslytizer of Java (on top of everything they did earlier).

Success Stories of the 90's — The Companies

Although personal computing was already a decade old ten years ago, it was still primarily the domain of big-time geeks and small companies. Then everything exploded. From the same source as "10 Visionaries" came 10 companies that made the 90's the high-tech success story it was. In no particular order, 3 are:

- Id Software: Father of the gaming revolution.

- Apple Computer: Rags to riches to rags — and back.

- America Online: Millions of users served.

Trends from the 90's — Will They Shape the Future?

More philosophically, the "10 Visionaries" web feed tells us that where we've been is the best prognosticator of the future and picked the 10 *trends* of the 90's. Today's 3 are:

- *"Pop Goes the Web!"* The internet invades popular culture.

- *"The E-commerce Explosion"* Online transactions change the way we spend — and make —money.

- *"Welcome to the Global Village"* Email and the Net revolutionize communication.

Ada's Window on the World Staff

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YOUR NAME CAN GO HERE

Quote of the Day

"**Computers in the future may weigh no more than 1.5 tons**."

— Popular Mechanics, 1945

Geek Humor

**99 little bugs in the code,
99 bugs in the code,
fix one bug, compile it again,
101 little bugs in the code.
101 little bugs in the code, ..
(Repeat until BUGS == 0)**