July 1997 Newsletter

July Meeting

Its been a year and a half since IBM began shipping its 64-bit PowerPC AS/400s. Many customers were apprehensive about making the transition to the RISC box because not only do you change hardware but you must also upgrade the operating system at the same time. This was not an overnight job but more of a weekend job.

As more and more customers are moving to the new RISC machines they are finding that with good planning and careful attention to IBM's Road Map, the transition can be smooth and well worth it.

For our meeting this month we have asked **Mike Seville**, IBM's local CISC to RISC upgrade guru, to come and speak to us on the subject of *CISC to RISC Upgrade*. In addition to Mike Seville, we have asked **Ken Duke** and **Mike Robbins** of **CompHealth** to report on their experiences with their recent CISC to RISC upgrade. Ken is the Applications Development Manager and Mike is the AS/400 Technical Specialist for CompHealth.

If you are planning on making this upgrade in the future, come and find out what you need to know to prepare for the upgrade and learn from CompHealth's recent upgrade experiences.

Our meeting this month will be held on **Wednesday, July 9th at 11:00 a.m. at the Murray City Offices (City Council Chambers), 5025 South State Street.**

May Meeting Highlights

Our meeting topic for the month of June was *Creating Subprocedures with RPG IV*. The session was presented by **John Dietz**, a senior consultant with **Vitrex**. A subprocedure can be thought of as a super-powerful subroutine with local variables, predefined parameters, and a return value.

Because subprocedures are directly accessible from within Eval operations, they provide a way for a programmer to create the equivalent of a BIF (Built In Function). This opens up a world of opportunity for AS/400 programmers who no longer have to wait for IBM to enhance their beloved RPG language.

Subprocedures were introduced in the V3R6 release of the RPG IV language for RISC processors. Later, V3R2 provided this functionality for CISC processors.

In other languages, such as C, one finds standard libraries of common functions. The advent of subprocedures lets you create such libraries using RPG IV. The procedure interface and procedure prototype ensure that the subprocedures adhere to a consistent standard for parameter passing.

The benefit gained by using subprocedures is the ability to write a group of related procedures, such as date routines, and group them in a module. So instead of rewriting the code over and over again you just bind the module into your application and use the pre-written procedures.

We would like to thank John Dietz for taking the time to speak to our group on this topic. A job well done!

Short Takes

Kasparov In Deep Thought
Chess champ Garry Kasparov has asked for another shot at IBM's Deep Blue to try to regain his title. One insider E-mailed us Kasparov's alleged strategy: "I understand Garry has a plan," the informant wrote. "He's going to schedule the rematch with the computer for just after midnight on January 1, 2000."

June 23, 1997 *Information Week*

TV or Web TV?
If you believe the sales hype, there's no easier way to start surfing the Web than with WebTV, the set-top box and turnkey Web-browsing technology Microsoft recently bought for $425 million. So why is it that the Waite Group's new book, *I Want My WebTV*, is a whopping 384 pages? Waite officials say the $19.95 "witty and conversational" tome teaches readers how to effortlessly master WebTV's handheld remote control. We asked if there was a chapter devoted to plugging it into the wall. Waite officials were not amused.

June 23, 1997 *Information Week*

Project Lightning Strikes Again

The Client Access group at the AS/400 Division of IBM has posted a Beta 3 version of **Project Lightning** that now includes record-level access to DB2/400. Lightning has been available for the past 2 months, but without the much-awaited feature. To test drive the new beta, point your browser to *www.as400.ibm.com/products/light-ning/betainfo.htm* and follow the instructions. If you have installed an earlier version of the beta, be sure to uninstall it before trying out Beta 3.

With a Little Help from My (IBM) Friends

Wouldn't it be great to have someone help you install **Client Access for Windows 95/NT** by leading you step by step through the connection? Well, someone will: IBM. Just head over to *www.as400.ibm.com/client/connect.htm*. From there choose from TCP/IP; AnyNet; IPX; asynchronous; or SNA for SDLC, twinax, or 802.2 Token-ring and Ethernet. The Web pages that follow will show you exactly what to do.

This is Preposterous!

The Columbian Drug Cartel has just announced a proposed settlement with the United States. Here is its statement: "Impose no further limits on us, and let us continue to addict and kill as many people as we can. In return, we'll take from everyone we enslave a small amount of money which we will make available as compensation to the government and for those we've killed." As if this wasn't preposterous enough, most of the state Attorneys General have agreed to it. Oh, ...wait a minute. The proposed deal wasn't from the Columbian Drug Cartel after all. It was from the tobacco companies. http://ash.org/

Humor Department

Microsoft vs. General Motors

Bill Gates wanted to look good and impress everyone with his success. He decided to measure the accomplishments of Microsoft against General Motors. The comparison went like this: If automotive technology had kept pace with computer technology over the past few decades, you would now be driving a V-32 instead of a V-8, and it would have a top speed of 10,000 miles per hour. Or you could have an economy car that weighs 30 pounds and gets a thousand miles to a gallon of gas. In either case the sticker price of a new car would be less than $50. In response to all this goading, GM responds: "Yes, but would you really want to drive a car that crashes twice a day?"

Gotta Give Her Credit!

I was signing the receipt for my credit card purchase when the clerk noticed that I had never signed my name on the back of the credit card. She informed me that she could not complete the transaction unless the card was signed. When I asked why, she explained that it was necessary to compare the signature on the credit card with the signature I just signed on the receipt. So I signed the credit card in front of her. She carefully compared that signature to the one I signed on the receipt. As luck would have it, they matched. What is this woman doing working in a store? She should apply for a job as an IS Director!

How does a chicken cross the road?

NT Chicken: Will cross the road in June. No, August. September for sure.

OS/2 Chicken: It crossed the road in style years ago, but it was so quiet that nobody noticed.

Win 95 Chicken: You see different colored feathers while it crosses, but cook it and it still tastes like ... chicken.

Microsoft Chicken (TM): It's already on both sides of the road. And it just bought the road.

OOP Chicken: It doesn't need to cross the road, it just sends a message.

Assembler Chicken: First it builds the road ...

C Chicken: It crosses the road without looking both ways.

C++ Chicken: The chicken wouldn't have to cross the road, you'd simply refer to him on the other side.

VB Chicken: USHighways!TheRoad.cross (aChicken)

Delphi Chicken: The chicken is dragged across the road and dropped on the other side.

Java Chicken: If your road needs to be crossed by a chicken, the server will download one to the other side. (Of course, those are chicklets)

Newton Chicken: Can't cluck, can't fly, and can't lay eggs, but you can carry it across the road in your pocket !

Cray Chicken: Crosses faster than any other chicken, but if you don't dip it in liquid nitrogen first, it arrives on the other side fully cooked.

Quantum Logic Chicken: The chicken is distributed probabalistically on all sides of the road until you observe it on the side of your course.

Lotus Chicken: Don't you *dare* try to cross the road the same way we do !

Mac Chicken: No reasonable chicken owner would want a chicken to cross the road, so there's no way to tell it to.

COBOL Chicken:

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    0001-CHICKEN-CROSSING.
      IF NO-MORE-VEHICLES THEN
            PERFORM 0010-CROSS-THE-ROAD
            VARYING STEPS FROM 1 BY 1 UNTIL
            ON-THE-OTHER-SIDE
      ELSE
            GO TO 0001-CHICKEN-CROSSING
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Mark Your Calendar

July 9
IBM Midrange User Group
Monthly meeting held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 11:00 AM at the Murray City Office (City Council Chambers), 5025 South State Street.

July 10
Utah Computer Society (Blue Chips)
Monthly meeting held the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM at the U of U Engineering building, room 104. For more information call 281-8339.

July 24-25
Midrange Technical Conference, Costa Mesa, Calif. Call 1-800-525-7013 to register.

July 27-30
COMMON Regional Event, Vail, Colo. Call 1-800-761-5799 to register.

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