



“Ada-WOW”

Ada's Window On the World



Crowne Plaza Redondo Beach & Marina Hotel
Redondo Beach, California, USA
1999 October 17-21

Post-Conference, Nov 1999
Volume 1, Issue 4

Thanks for the Memories!

By Hal Hart (TRW)

SIGAda'99 Conference Chair
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I've had so much “fun” organizing SIGAda'99 and catalyzing this daily newsletter that I just had to produce this extra post-conference issue of Ada WOW to communicate to all of you some final happenings and some of my thoughts from SIGAda'99.

There are several things from the end of the conference to touch on in this issue – SIGAda awards, Barry Boehm's closing keynote, some attendance demographics and preliminary conference evaluation conclusions – plus a couple “thought pieces” written by behind-the-scenes writer Mike (*aka M.P.*) Walsh that didn't fit in earlier issues.

On a personal level, I have to say I have been fortunate to have many, many “highs” in both my professional and family life, but those 6 days at the Crowne Plaza (*and the adrenaline rush that must have sustained me through so many consecutive 18- to 20-hour days*) will surely be a foremost favorite memory I will carry with me for years! There's energy, verve, and passion when Ada people get together that I always treasure. I have received emails from several of you since the conference expressing similar feelings.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to SIGAda'99 attendees for what you all gave to me. It was nice to enjoy some measurable technical, attendance, and financial successes for SIGAda, but it's the intangible rewards I received from all of you that has made this hard journey very gratifying, well worth the “price.” Circumstances permitting in my TRW career, I wouldn't hesitate to volunteer to be a SIGAda conference chair again sometime in the future. (*Please see my “More Thanks” article on p.4 recognizing deserving individuals.*)^{H²}

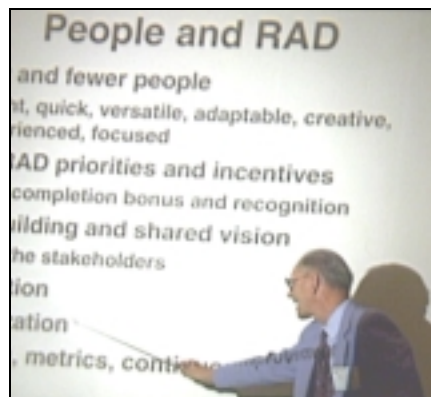
Ada-WOW Lives Online

We are especially pleased to report you will be able to “re-live” SIGAda'99 via our web posting of all 5 issues of this daily conference newsletter, Ada-WOW. Don't worry about your paper copies from the conference getting tattered or lost -- look for them linked from the conference homepage or directly at <http://www.acm.org/sigada/conf/sigada99/Ada-WOW>. *In color!* I hope this favorably received new *Ada-WOW* tradition lives on.

SIGAda 2000

By Ada-WOW

In closing SIGAda'99, SIGAda Chair Ben Brosgol (Aonix) announced that SIGAda has not yet chosen among multiple attractive options for location and theme for SIGAda 2000. There will definitely be a SIGAda 2000 and it will probably be the week after Election Day in **November 2000**. Additionally, SIGAda will be cooperating with sister societies on other activities important to Ada community members. When plans for SIGAda 2000 are firmed up, SIGAda members will read about them in Ada LETTERS (probably the March issue), on the SIGAda website, and via a broadcast to SIGAda-Announce. Start making your plans now to attend another great SIGAda event next year!



Closing Keynoter Barry Boehm (see p. 2)

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Tucker Presents Best Student Paper Award to Thomas Quinot

SIGAda Awards

By Hal Hart (TRW) & Ed Colbert
(Absolute Software),

SIGAda Awards Comm. Co-Chairs

On October 20, the 1999 SIGAda awards for **Outstanding Ada Community Contributions** were awarded to

- **Ted Baker** (Florida State Univ.),
- **David Emery** (MITRE), and
- **Dirk Craeynest** (Ada Belgium...).

SIGAda Distinguished Service Awards went to

- **Norman Cohen** (IBM Watson Labs), and
- **SIGAda's ASIS Working Group**, chaired by Currie Colket (MITRE, SIGAda Vice Chair for Meetings and Conferences).

Additionally, Tucker Taft presented **Thomas Quinot** (*ENST/INFRES*) with the “*Best Student Paper*” award for SIGAda'99.

Read more about SIGAda Award winners in the March 2000 issue of Ada LETTERS. Meanwhile, you already have Thomas's prizing-winning student paper “CORBA and CORBA Services for DSA” in your hands.

Congratulations to all winners, and thanks for your contributions!



Dirk Craeynest (Ada Belgium) Receives Outstanding Ada Community Contribution Award from Ed Colbert



ASIS Working Group Members Sergey Rybin, Clyde Roby, & Bill Thomas Accept for Currie Colket, ASISWG Chair

Barry Boehm Predicts More Process in the Future

By Ada-WOW

Barry Boehm (USC), who arguably has “invented” more software technologies than anyone (*fulfilling Alan Kay's famous axiom that the best way to predict the future is to invent it*) challenged us to expect the biggest leverage in software improvement to come from 3 trends in organizations' software processes: (1) Rapid Application Development (RAD) and “Schedule as Independent Variable” (SAIV, a cousin of CAIV), (2) model-based process tailoring, and (3) agent-aided processes. Better than giving details of Barry's address here, you can review the presentation charts of all three

keynoters now from the new button atop the conference home page at www.acm.org/sigada/conf/sigada99

Some Numbers: Demographics, Our Roles, Some Ratings...

By Ada-WOW

- SIGAda'99 had 188 registered attendees (*probably* > 200 given volunteers + exhibits staff).
 - ◆ 20-some locals came for Tutorial(s) only
- 22% of you came from outside the U.S.
 - ◆ 33 from Europe (Germany leading with 10, France & Sweden 6 each)
 - ◆ 4 came from N. America, 2 from Asia, 1 from S. America
 - ◆ (*Hmm, those 7 Australian CSCers reported in Issue 3 must use their temporary U.S. residences :-)*)
- California send a whopping 1/3 of all attendees; Virginia tied *Germany* for 2nd at 10; TX, MA, MD, & FL each sent 5 or more.
- Approx. 65% of us were from industry; others were evenly split (*11% each*) between academia, government, & self-employed.
- About half of us “manage” no one, but several manage 10 or more, with 30 being the max reported.
- 60% reported the Exhibit Hall of “strong value,” 30%+ said “some-what,” and < 10% said “no value.”
- Less than 10% of us have “no” influence on software purchasing decisions, with about 30% each “some,” “strong,” and “decision maker.”
- 25% said this was their 1st Ada conference; 15% said 2nd. (*Ada-WOW likes seeing the new blood!*)
- On the overall scale of 1-5, SIGAda'99's rating averaged 4.2.
 - ◆ John McCormick's keynote (*a perfect score of all 5's!!*) was rated the run-away *Highlight* of SIGAda'99
 - ◆ Ada Core Technologies's musical gala was the *non-technical* (*and that's debatable :-)* most-mentioned Favorite
 - ◆ (“*Conceiving Ada*” the movie *definitely was NOT*)

Dress For Success - Not!

By Michael P. Walsh (LA ACM, Past Chair; TRW, retired)

I heard a report on casual dress in industry on KNX radio and it shows that some of us are really doing it wrong. Short sleeved shirts are all wrong and your shoes should always be solid and well polished. Things like casual brown pants should not be worn. When you are dressed like that you do not project a strong, masculine image. The commentator was asked about the CEOs of Silicon Valley and replied that when they went out to get money from financiers and bankers they would change to their conservative suits.

Her advice to women wasn't quite as detailed, but basically was “don't show up at 8:00 in the morning looking as if you were prepared to go to a social reception.” She said Ally McBeal is television, don't dress like that in the real world.

Big Thanks to Los Angeles ACM & Subunits!

By H²

Part of SIGAda's strategy for financial success on SIGAda'99 was to use volunteers for more logistical support than was our habit in the Tri-Ada days. As is their tradition whenever an ACM conference comes near LA, the Los Angeles ACM Chapter came through *big time* with both financial support (for a local publicity campaign, partially footed by *LA SIGSOFT!*) and by supplying almost all the onsite volunteers. I was honored that at least 5 past, present, & future Chairs of LA ACM spent most of the week with us: Bill Cook (present Chair), Roger Mills, Mike Walsh, Ed “Madman” Manderfield, and Lee Schmidt -- plus Paul Schmidt (present Treasurer), George Huling, Karen Owens, Sy Wong, and Chris Sparks who comprised the Local Arrangements Committee under the leadership of Winsor Brown (*also Chair of the benevolent LA SIGSOFT*) and Madman (*also current Chair of LA SIGAda*). Thanks so much to all these dear friends for liberating me for such “fun” as Ada-WOW during this week! If you live in the greater LA area and want to connect with like-minded professionals in monthly meetings and in *giving* to

your professional community, check out LA ACM's webpage at www.acm.org/chapters/los_angeles

Look for Workshop Reports in March Ada LETTERS

By Ada-WOW

Well, I guess that title just about says it. In earlier issues you read descriptions of SIGAda'99's workshops, plus a preliminary report from Tuesday's on a Standard Component Library for Ada. All workshop organizers are now tasked with coordinating and finalizing reports to publish in the March 2000 issue of Ada LETTERS to spread results and stimulate next steps.

Opinions about Technology

By M.P. Walsh

There were two articles in the Sunday, October 10, 1999 Los Angeles Times newspaper editorial section that give a somewhat less than favorable view of technology in general and with references to our own area of information technology in particular.

One column was "We Love Technology Even as It Harms Us" by Kirkpatrick Sale, author of the book "Rebels Against The Future: The Luddites and Their War on the Industrial Revolution". He says: "Ours is a society that deeply believes in the beauty and benevolence of technology, and regards it as the essential foundation for success and happiness. Yet we know that technology has dangerous downsides, unintended consequences, accidents and misuses; and the more powerful and complex the technology, the more threatening the downsides."

He follows with remarks about the Mars Climate Observer failure, an allusion to the "plutonium laden Cassini spacecraft", the latest Japanese nuclear failure and allusions to previous and the potential of failures at U. S. nuclear facilities. He remarks that the Y2K problem that could cause "immense and potentially life-threatening upheavals was taken seriously only when it was almost upon us and that we are depending on the same kinds of people who caused the problem to solve it. He discusses the problems of a depleted ozone layer, global warming, pollution, and species extinction. He

admits that predictions of immediate collapse have so far turned out to be exaggerated and that techno-fix solutions might be found for the assorted crises. He says the history of modern science is not rich with technological solutions that do not contain additional problems. He says that people are being told that faith is justified in each new technical advance, but this faith is hard to maintain in the face of evidence that encourages skepticism. He says this explains the bizarre over-reaction to the Y2K when people we acknowledge as experts say billions of computer chips in the world do not have a four-digit problem or recognize dates in the first place.

He finishes the column with: "Perhaps the deeper truth here is that a society resting on polar opposites must become in some way schizophrenic, unable to trust either of its world views or forced to live in an unstable transition from one to another, until its self-comprehension eventually disintegrates. It then ceases to have any coherent beliefs, any way of understanding phenomena around it, and retreats to the delusion and lethargy and numbness—and, in time to madness.



**We Hope You Had Time to Shop or Eat or
Sunset-Gaze at the Nearby Redondo Pier**

My guess is that we are well along in that process."

In my opinion, Mr. Sale has gone a bit over-the-top. Of course, it is impossible to tell in one short column that I have cut down considerably in the above report. He undoubtedly covers things in greater depth in his book. I will also note that the same LA Times editorial section has a cautionary editorial "Travelers, Be Y2K-Wise" that gives some common sense advice to people planning travel abroad at the rollover to the year 2000. One very practical suggestion is that travelers make certain that they are aware of changes in schedules during this period, as some airlines will not fly

their aircraft on January 1, 2000. You might say that is a case of, even if nothing happens (to the computers) something still happens.

While these items were of interest, the most thought provoking article I found in the Times editorial section was "Full of Information, Free of Ideas" by Richard Rodriguez an editor at Pacific News Service who is the author of the book "Days of Obligation".

He reports that US Department of Education says a nationwide assessment of 4th, 8th, and 12th graders showed that only one in four students can write at a level of proficiency necessary for future job success. Rodriguez remarks that he doesn't doubt the survey's findings but wonders whether writing skills are necessary for "job success". He says he knows graduates of some of our finest universities, successful college professors, bankers, and CEOs who are marginally literate. He says that Marshall McLuhan predicted the decline of literacy and the rise of new oral/aural technologies. He says:

"In our age of Bill Gates, we like to think that we are inventing a new technology. In truth technology is reinventing us—pushing us, driving our impatience, shaping our distraction. Electronic technology has exchanged reflection for spontaneity. Individual thought has been replaced by communal exchange."

The article continues on the same line that our society is rewarding those who react, not those who think. That we are already on the "information superhighway", global and instantaneous. Along this new highway, information, not ideas, is the valued currency. We may be heading for a great, global irony where communication is quick, but no one has anything to say.

I found Mr. Rodriguez's column very interesting. He covered many more examples than those I have reported above. I will note that this type of concern about the difference between data and real thinking is much older than the Internet. I have read other articles by people who believe computers and the Internet are a positive influence because they require writing and promote interaction while television provides only an unidirectional input to a passive viewer.

Since I grew up before TV, let alone the Internet I remember that there were concerns then about the abilities of the younger generation to read, write and think. However, I don't dispute that the problem as become worse with the passing years. I can only wonder what will happen when "Virtual Reality" provides higher degrees of sensory input and is available at a sufficiently low price to appeal to a mass audience. I realize that where I can project a future where people can get "zonked out" without using any drugs, that others may perceive a great teaching tool.

More Thanks

By H²

Every member of the Conference Committee did his or her job and did it super! SIGAda'99's success would not have come about without everyone's conscientious efforts, and my *Thanks* to Tucker, Franco, Cookie, Clyde, Judy & Frank, Ed, Winsor, and Bill for their outstanding efforts and results! But *last but definitely not least*, I thank jack-of-all-trades **David Harrison**, my Publicity Chair, Webmaster, Ada-WOW Production Editor, and constant confidant and advisor for over a year (*along with Ben & Currie*) on all conference decisions. No one put in more effort over a longer period contributing to SIGAda'99 than David did!

Finally, I owe a huge thanks to my Ada-WOW staff – see masthead at the right which names everyone who contributed, including 2 famous non-attendees (via email). I especially THANK student grantee Haiping, Mike, David, Chris (Mr. Ada), Karlotto, JC, and Steve for their every-day contributions. Come join us for more fun on the Ada-WOW staff at SIGAda 2000. –H²



The View South from the Hotel toward Palos Verdes

Final Memories in Photos

By Ada-WOW



Attendees Voted the Conference's Technical Highlight to be Keynoter John McCormick's Multimedia Presentation on His Ada-Controlled Train Lab to Teach Real-Time Systems at N. Iowa Univ.



It Wouldn't Be a SIGAda Conference without Karen Syck (ACT) as Lady Ada



Ed Schonberg and Karen Take a Bow after ACT, the Village Light Opera, & Professor Paul Gave Us the Other Most-Mentioned Conference Highlight



21 Years Ago This Fall, Ada Was Named and SIGAda's Long-Time Comrade Jovial Users Group (JUG) was Founded -- It's Fitting that Ada 95 Designer Tucker Taft Helps Celebrate Both "Coming of Ada" with Bob Engimann of SEA's Jovial Office.

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Robert Leif Has a Question for a Speaker

Join us at SIGAda 2000 next November!