

Greetings

Michael D. O'Dell Editor-in-Chief

We Made it Again!

It's that time of year again – another volume completed and a new one is coming down the chute. This means that everyone associated with the journal has survived a second year and is ready to do it again. Publishing mavens will tell you that the third year for a journal is life-or-death turning point. If you survive it you will continue. The other alternative is obvious. Thanks – no pressure at all!

Contents

Leading off this issue we are please to have a paper by Marc Shapiro and his group at INRIA about a new object-oriented operating system called SOS being built in France. Applying object-oriented ideas to the internals of operating systems is a hot topic these days and SOS is an important effort in that area.

The second paper in the issue is by Ralph Griswold showing how the structure of the ICON programming language, and its elevation of “failure” to first-class citizenship, makes many data structures programming tasks dramatically simpler and eliminates the need for “exception handling” as a separate construction in a language. If you take the trouble to learn about ICON and discover how failure is a natural part of programming, and hence ought to be a part of programming languages, you will discover that the inside of your head will have changed shape as a result of having done so. Indeed, Professor Griswold's languages, starting at least with SNOBOL4, have usually required one to remodel

one's mind a bit to truly appreciate what is going on. Make no mistake – this is genuinely a feature.

The fourth installment in our continuing saga of the evolution of C++ is Bjarne Stroustrup's paper on extending C++ to support multiple inheritance from multiple superclasses. This allows derived classes to draw on an arbitrarily-larger gene pool, and is a mechanism which has been shown to be very valuable in dealing with some tricky problems which arise in object-oriented languages without this capability. This is an important addition to C++.

A Brief Preview of Coming Attractions

At the current time, Volume 3 Number 1 is set to be an issue devoted to electronic music. Those of you who attended the Summer 1986 USENIX conference in Atlanta will surely recall the two outstanding music-related talks. I will leave it to your imagination as to the identities of some of the contributors to 3.1. But, even if you guess those, I still guarantee some real surprises. And yes, we are well-aware that print isn't an ideal recording medium for music.

And Roll the Credits

I want to thank all the people who worked so hard to produce Volume 2. First and foremost are the authors, for without them there would be nothing to publish. When the news from the reviewers was less than good they were gracious; when the reviewers desired corrections or emendations they were prompt and creative. And most importantly, they made the great leap of submitting a manuscript in the first place. Many, many thanks to all of you for your efforts.

The Editorial Board is the backbone of the effort. Our reviewers willingly volunteer their precious time and energy to make the journal what it is. Review is what a journal is all about and without it, there is no journal. My special thanks to each and every one of you. In addition to the usual suspects listed on the masthead, a large number of others have reviewed manuscripts on occasion and I would like to thank them here: Eric Allman, Sunil

Das, Keith Gorlen, Mike Karels, Sam Leffler, Mark Linton, and Joe Sventek.

As last year, the makeup of the Editorial Board will change with 3.1 to provide both fresh faces and well-deserved rests.

The USENIX Publications Staff, largely but not entirely in the person of Tom Strong, produces camera-ready images which are then handed to the production crew at the University of California Press. They print, bind, and distribute the real, physical object which occasionally appears in your mailbox. Journals such as this one are sometimes called “difficult copy” in the publishing trade and the efforts required to produce the outstanding quality of our end product are greatly appreciated.

Finally, a jab at our august Managing Editor, Peter Salus. He told me not to say he works hard, so I won't. That doesn't change the facts, however. My deepest thanks to him for getting it all done with style and flair.

And the last thank-you is reserved for you, the reader. If there were no one to read the journal, there would be no reason to publish it. Your compliments and encouragement have been greatly appreciated, and your comments and criticism eagerly received and fostered.

Thanks for coming, and I can't wait for 3.1.

P.S. Oh yes, help us out and send a manuscript.