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The Real Times

Vol.37 No.2

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Nov 1998

IEEE Computer Society/GBC/ACM Joint Meeting 6:30 pm, Thursday, November 19, 1998 at BBN **Practical UML - A Process to Make It Work** **Else-Marie Ostling, President, BIRKA Group, Inc.**

Now that UML (Unified Modeling Language) has been selected as the industry standard for object and component modeling, how do we make use of it? This is what many designers/developers ask themselves today. Having struggled along for years without a modeling standard, many in the object/component field are now questioning if UML is really the answer. Reading the UML spec, or the plethora of books on the subject, does not seem to alleviate this problem. The missing piece in this puzzle is a process. A process that tells us where to start, what parts of UML to use when, and more importantly what deliverables to produce along the way to ensure that we build a robust design/architecture for our application. This is why many authors, including the creators of UML, are currently focusing on putting something in print about a process. For example, the authors of UML (Booch, Jacobson and Rumbaugh) are adding the finishing touches to The Unified Process, which will be released by the end of the year.

This talk will cover an introduction to UML - what it is and what it is not. It also will also present a practical process that defines how the UML notations can be used and extended, to successfully design and implement component-based business applications. The process includes activities on how to map the object model to a relational database, a typical data store for many business applications. A common problem when embarking on your first UML project is to use an all or nothing approach to it. In this talk we will also discuss the benefits of each notation, what it can be used for, when it is appropriate to use and when it can be left out. The talk will also provide an overview of the design and development tools available in the marketplace today that support UML.

Ms. Else-Marie Östling is President and Chief Technologist at BIRKA Group, Inc., where some of her responsibilities include development of the practical UML(tm) process, BIRKA's process for software development, as well as providing mentoring, training and strategic technology consulting to the company's customers. Ms. Östling specializes in mentoring and knowledge transfer of object-oriented modeling, architecture, and application development, and has worked with a wide variety of client organizations in the United States, Canada, Europe and Asia. She has over 15 years of experience in methods and process development, with an emphasis on object technology. Ms. Östling is a frequent speaker at conferences and seminars all over the world. A few of the previous positions held by Ms. Östling include Vice President of Customer Services at Riverton Software Corporation, Vice President of Professional Services at Objectory Corporation (now Rational Corporation), and Regional Manager of Implementation Services at Index Technology Corporation. Ms. Östling holds a BS degree in Computer Science (with a major in Methodology) from Upsala University in Sweden.

This meeting, jointly sponsored by the GBC/ACM and Boston Section, IEEE Computer Society will be held at GTE (formerly Bolt Beranek and Newman (BBN)), Cambridge, MA. Everyone is invited for light refreshments and informal discussion from 6:30 to 7:00 PM. The formal part of the meeting will start at 7:00 PM. For more information, contact Ellen Glusman at 617 374-8486 (eglusm@ctp.com). Directions to GTE (formerly Bolt Beranek and Newman (BBN)): From Route 128, Lexington: Take Route 2 inbound. The four-lane highway narrows to two lanes near Route 16. At the traffic light bear right onto Alewife Brook Parkway. Proceed past shopping centers to the Fresh Pond Rotary. Take the first right onto Concord Avenue. Fawcett Street is one block down Concord Avenue, on the right.

From the Mass. Pike: Take the Pike inbound to the Cambridge/Allston exit. Exit onto the Cambridge off ramp and take Cambridge Street. Turn left onto either Storrow or Memorial Drive. (Storrow Drive is on the Boston side of the Charles River and Memorial Drive is on the Cambridge side.) Follow the Storrow and Memorial Drive directions below. From Storrow and Memorial Drives: Take Storrow or Memorial Drive west; follow signs to Routes 2, 3, 16. Remain on Route 2. The road will become narrow and winding. This is the Fresh Pond Parkway. At the first rotary, take the third right onto Concord Avenue. You will then come to a second rotary (the Fresh Pond Rotary). Continue straight through this rotary (stay on Concord Avenue). Fawcett Street is one block down Concord Avenue, on the right. Once on Fawcett Street, 70 Fawcett Street (the GTE building containing Newman Auditorium) is on the right side of Fawcett Street, about 1/2 block from Concord Avenue. Park in the lot on the right side of the street; the lot is immediately before, and Via Public Transit: Take the T to Harvard Square. From Harvard Square take the Concord Ave./Belmont Center bus. Get off at Fawcett Street.

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Timely notices of events, meetings, and other activities of interest to the Chapter's Membership should be submitted by the 10th of the month Before the intended issue and sent, with attention to the Managing Editor to:

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The Chapter's mailing list is available to related professional organizations or for commercial use. Please contact the Membership Chair at the address above when requesting mailing lists.

Annual subscription cost is included in the Chapter Membership dues of \$10.00. See top line on mailing label for membership expiration date. Library subscriptions are free. Please send orders for copies to the Chapter mailing address above.

Postmaster:

Address changes should be sent to the mailing address above. Allow eight to ten weeks for changes to address or membership renewal to become effective. Send old label with address modifications

What happened to the October Meeting?

What happened with the meeting was this: We had a speaker lined up, and were about to put out a late Real Times announcing it (that's another story), when we discovered that our usual location at BBN was needed by BBN itself for one of its own meetings. It was too late to arrange another meeting, so it was cancelled.

Incidentally, here is a perfect volunteer opportunity: Would you like to step in and manage our monthly meeting arrangements (including backup sites if necessary) to make things go right? We would love to have someone who can stay on top of this issue.

Why is this Real Times issue so late?

Everything connected with GBC/ACM, the Professional Development Seminars, and the Real Times is handled by volunteers who have real full-time jobs. We had every intention of getting the #2 issue out on time, but alas, the real world intruded. The company of the acting editor of this newsletter (me) was caught up in a rush project with a tight deadline, I have been working constantly since Labor Day, weekends and evenings included, to get a vital part of the company's software done in time. This, combined with family obligations (3 kids, a spouse, 5 cats) left very little time for a newsletter. If you have been in the software business any length of time, then you have probably been in similar situations. Perhaps the software industry will outgrow this mode of operation someday. Or perhaps not.

In any case, here is another volunteer opportunity. If we have someone who knows or can learn Pagemaker who can help produce the Real Times, that would be highly useful. Also, a job that takes some time is simply locating stories and items to be placed on the pages. There is no reason that needs to be done by the same person. We would love to have more volunteers here to help. Here's an example of a task to be done by a volunteer who knows Pagemaker. Look at the left bottom item on this page. See how ugly it looks, compared with the way it used to look? The problem is that when files were moved to this computer, I didn't have all the matching fonts, and I have not yet figured out how to fix it.

What was that PDS about??

The brochure description for the Professional Development Seminar give by Phil LaPlante probably gave many people a strange impression. The talk was about real-time programming, but the bullet items were strongly suggestive of Java. What happened was this: the correct bullet items were submitted, but in preparing the brochure, a copy/paste error was made, and the bullet items from a previous Java PDS were left in place. Several people did proofreading of the brochure before it went out, but we all missed it.

ACM Repository

Researchers have made their papers available by putting them on personal web pages, departmental pages, and on various ad hoc sites known only to cognoscenti. Until now, there has not been a single repository to which researchers from the whole field of computing can submit reports.

This is about to change. Through a partnership of ACM, the Los Alamos e-Print archive, and NCSTRL (Networked Computer Science Technical Reference Library), an online Computing Research Repository (CoRR) is being established. The Repository has been integrated into the collection of over 20,000 computer science research reports and other material available through NCSTRL (<http://www.ncstrl.org>) and will be linked with the ACM Digital Library. Most importantly, the Repository will be available to all members of the community at no charge.

We encourage you to start using the Repository right away. For more details, see <http://xxx.lanl.gov/archive/cs/intro.html>. That site provides information on how to submit documents, browse, search, and subscribe to get notification of new articles of interest. Please spread the word among your colleagues and students. CoRR will only gain in value as more researchers use it.

See <http://www.acm.org/repository> for a more detailed description of CoRR.

From <http://www.acm.org/chapters/webtech/#IDEPANEL>:

Java IDE Panel Managing Complexity in Java Development

Inprise, Microsoft, Sybase/Powersoft, and Symantec

Tuesday, October 20, 1998, 7:00 pm

IBM Solution Partnership Center, Waltham

Abstract:

This will be a special panel discussion featuring representatives from many of the top vendors of Java development tools. The focus of the panel will be about managing complexity in all aspects of Java development, from editing and debugging to library management, project management, version management and deployment, and how software tools can help developers to manage complexity and develop Java applications successfully. Don't miss it!

Thanks to the generosity of IBM, we will hold future meetings at the IBM Solutions Partnership Center (get more information here) in Waltham starting in January, 1998. The center is located at 404 Wyman Street, at the NORTH ENTRANCE. You can find a map with directions here. Coming from Trapelo Road, it's the first driveway on the right after the intersection with Lincoln St. which is at the crest of a hill. When you get there, be sure to use the NORTH ENTRANCE and park in the garage. The gate is always open and it's OK to park there. From the garage, go the main entrance (on level 2), past the front desk, and the Solutions Center is the next door on the right. By the way, be sure to use the NORTH ENTRANCE! If you're not sure, just ask for the 'Solutions Center'.

REVIEW of October 17, 1998 Professional Development Seminar

Reviewed by David L. Presberg

Phillip A. Laplante, PE, PhD, conducted the second in the Fall 1998 PDS series seminars on the topic “Real-Time System Design: Current Issues and Challenges” at UMass Boston campus. Dr. Laplante is currently the President of Pennsylvania Institute of Technology, a two-year technical training college that gives him sufficient time to write and lecture on his primary-interests: embedded real-time systems such as for avionics and process control, and real-time image processing. For this seminar, he covered material that he had developed in a full-term course and had previously covered in an intensive five-day seminar. The lecture notes (241 slides, reduced in printing to afford the attendees note-taking room) covered all his topics, but he elided many of them for the format of this very full day. Given the general level of prior experience or background preparation of the audience, the pace was appropriate and well received according to the post-seminar evaluation results. Also available for attendees was his recently published “Real-Time Systems Design and Analysis”, discounted from its list price of \$69.95 to \$55.

Dr. Laplante conducted the seminar in a relaxed and generally interactive manner, soliciting experience and opinions from the audience. His primary message was that there are no cookbooks for the construction of effective real-time systems. He even noted at one point that his own textbook raises more questions than it definitively answers: each real-time system must be constructed according to its own particular requirements. He conveyed the importance of approaching the analysis and implementation of a real-time system as a software engineering task, but that the practitioner should not rigidly follow structuring principles that don't directly contribute to the required responsiveness of the system. At the outset, he established his preferred definitions of real-time systems, and noted that with sufficiently broad understandings of responsiveness, all computer systems have a real-time aspect to them.

The major issues of a real-time system are: prediction and reduction of response times of the system; efficient utilization of computer resources; effective modelling of the system's temporal behavior for its design; implementation decisions such as language and hardware/software tradeoffs; fault tolerance; testing and maintenance. The attendees noted that, except for hard time constraints on reaction to events or responses to stimuli, most of these issues are common across all computer mediated systems. Throughout the day, all of these topics were discussed and, where appropriate, examples of approaches that furthered a system according to these criteria were explained.

Lunch was catered in the UMass dining area, a short walk through bridges on that modern campus, and offered a number of Italian dishes including manicotti, and other pasta and sauces: it was well received. Despite an unfortunate mistake in copy-editing the announcement brochure that listed the topics of a prior Java seminar, there was only one of the 46 attendees who was sufficiently misled to leave before the end. After the seminar a number of volunteers and a few attendees joined the speaker for dinner at Jimbo's restaurant in South Boston near Fish Pier. It all made for a quite enjoyable and informative day.

Found at <http://www.v-site.net/siggraph-ne/expo>:

SIGGRAPH/Boston Exhibition, Animation Screening, and Career Fair

The Boston chapter of ACM/SIGGRAPH will hold its second annual Exhibition, Animation Screening, and Career Fair for its January 1999 meeting. This event will be held in the West Wing of the Boston Museum of Science.

Many of the attending companies will be showing off what they do, their expertise, and their latest products. This is a great chance to see what is going on in computer graphics in the Boston area.

Many exhibitors will have representatives on hand that are specifically looking for computer graphics professionals.

This will be the "event of the year" for the Boston computer graphics scene. It will provide a rare opportunity to meet key players in person and to establish contacts with others involved in this industry.

The Electronic Theater videos from the last SIGGRAPH convention (July 1998) will be shown in Cahners Theater. The Electronic Theater is a collection of competitively submitted and juried computer animation produced for the SIGGRAPH convention. For many convention attendees, this is the highlight of the week.

All the Science Museum exhibits in the West Wing will be open for the duration of this event.

When:

Wednesday, 13 January 1999, from 6:30 to 11:00 in the evening.

There will be two showings of the Electronic Theater videos, at 7:15-8:45 and 9:15-10:45. Seating is limited, first come first serve. Preferential seating will be given to SIGGRAPH/Boston members and exhibitors.

Where:

The Boston Museum of Science, West Wing.

Cost:

Admission is free and open to the public. The total number of Electronic Theater seats are limited, so come early.

Books for Sale

GBC/ACM has the following books leftover from previous seminars available for sale. They are available on a first come first serve basis. Checks will be returned if the book is no longer available.

Title	Author	List Price	ACM Price	Quantity	Total
The JAVA Programming Language	Ken Arnold	\$34.38	\$25.00		
The HTML3 Manual of Style	Larry Aronson	\$24.95	\$20.00		
Inside OLE 2 (copyright 1994, w/diskettes)	Kraig Brockschmidt	\$49.95	\$10.00		
About Face: The Essentials of User Interface Design	Alan Cooper	\$29.25	\$20.00		
Working with Active Server Pages	Michael Corning	\$39.99	\$25.00		
JAVA: How to Program (with CD)	Paul Deitel	\$99.95	\$55.00		
JAVA: How to Program (book only)	Paul Deitel	\$51.00	\$40.00		
The SGML FAQ Book: Understanding the Foundation of HTML and XML	Steve DeRose	\$68.00	\$55.00		
A Discipline for Software Engineering	Watts Humphrey	\$47.29	\$35.00		
Real-Time Systems Design and Analysis	Phil LaPlante	\$69.95	\$55.00		
Concurrent Programming In Java	Doug Lea	\$39.76	\$30.00		
The Essence of COM with ActiveX	David Platt	\$49.95	\$35.00		
The C++ Programming Language, 3rd Ed	Bjarne Stroustrup	\$42.99	\$30.00		
Shipping and Handling - \$4.00 per book			\$4.00		
Check Total - payable to GBC/ACM					

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We are grateful to have support from three technical bookstores who have generously donated gift certificates which were given away during the fall PDS sessions. They are:

Quantum Books, located in Kendall Square, Cambridge. Perhaps because of their location (near MIT), they are especially strong in theory-related books.

Softpro, just north of the Burlington Mall. They are a good place to look for the latest books in Windows, Unix/Linux, Java, C++, or Networking.

Bookpool, located at www.bookpool.com on the internet. They don't have a physical store, but the packages they ship seem to come from Martha's Vineyard. If you don't mind waiting a little longer, they have very good prices on books.

Short courses listed at www.ieee-boston.org

The web site at www.ieee-boston.org is worth visiting for several reasons. One is a listing of several short courses being offered in the area:

- COM for Managers - Component Object Mode
- Internet/Intranet Core Technologies: Present Implementations and Future Technologies
- Introduction to Java Programming
- Introduction to Programming
- Introduction to Visual Basic Programming
- Software Validation and Verification: An Overview for Practitioners Balancing Software Quality and Time-to-Market
- Tracking and Kalman Filtering Made Easy

For details about cost and dates of these courses, visit www.ieee-boston.org.

For those who get the IEEE Reflector, further details may also be found there.

SPIN

The next meeting of the Software Process Improvement Network (SPIN) will be on Nov. 17, 1998, and will have Doug Orville talking on "A Better Alternative to the KPA by KPA Approach to Process Definition and Process Rollout". The talk will take place at the usual location at GTE. For more details about SPIN talks, including directions and times, see <http://www.cs.uml.edu/Boston-SPIN/>