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Editor's View

Changes and Chances

FoxPro Advisor gets a new Tips and Tricks editor, plus an opportunity for you to show your stuff.

By Tamar E. Granor, Editor

More than three years ago, we decided that FoxPro Advisor could serve its readers better by dedicating a column to short tips offered by those readers. When we considered what was involved in producing such a column, Drew Speedie was the obvious choice to take it on. The column premiered in the September '94 issue (incidentally the same one with which I moved from Technical Editor to Editor) as a two-page spread. Thirty-nine issues and two pages later, Drew has reached the point where he can no longer devote the considerable time it takes to putting Tips, Tricks and Traps together each month.

Drew has done a tremendous job with the column. You see the final result and I know, from the mail we receive, how valuable it is to so many people. What you may not see is the care that Drew has put into the job. When his column reaches me each month, it's in excellent condition, with minimal editing needed before I can send it into production.

The good news is that giving up the Tips and Tricks column should give Drew time to write more articles for FoxPro Advisor.

The other good news is that Steve Sawyer has agreed to take over as editor of the Tips and Tricks column beginning with the December issue, as well as join our crew of Contributing Editors. Steve is a long time contributor to the magazine, most recently with his two-part look at .DBF damage and repair tools in the September '97 issue. He's also the author of *Visual FoxPro Form Designer* in the Pros Talk Visual FoxPro series and one of the founders of the Detroit Area FoxPro User Group.

So keep those cards and letters (well, emails) coming to foxprotips@advisor.com and give Steve plenty of material to fill his column.

Are you the best?

Over the last couple of months, a number of you have shared your VFP successes with me. Now you have a chance to see how your applications stack up against others. Together with Microsoft, FoxPro Advisor is sponsoring the Visual FoxPro Excellence Awards. This competition pits completed applications against each other in a number of categories.

The award categories are Best Desktop/Network Solution, Best Web Site Solution, Best Client/Server Solution, Best Philanthropic Solution, Best Migration to Visual FoxPro and Best Packaged Application. Finalists in each category will be invited to DevCon '98 where

the winners will be announced. In addition, each finalist application will be highlighted on Microsoft's web site and in a special supplement to FoxPro Advisor.

If you think your application is really something special, this is your opportunity to tell the world about it. See the ad in this issue for more information. Full details and entry materials are available online.

Mark Your Calendar

I've saved the biggest news for last. Breaking with tradition, Microsoft is giving us plenty of notice for the next DevCon. DevCon '98 will be held beginning May 17 in Orlando. In the past, it's been months after one DevCon that the next one is announced, usually after rampant speculation in the community as to when and where. The usual lag has also given nay-sayers the chance to spread their view that there'll never be another FoxPro DevCon.

This time, everyone at DevCon '97 is going home knowing when they'll be getting together again. The early announcement makes it clear that Microsoft still considers VFP an important part of their product line. With the DevCon announcement, together with the Excellence Awards and some other initiatives, the VFP marketing team is making it clear that, paraphrasing Mark Twain, the rumors of VFP's demise have been greatly exaggerated.

It's too early to say exactly what DevCon '98 will feature, but you can be sure there'll be lots of high-quality sessions, top-name speakers and opportunities to learn. I'll tell you more as the information becomes available.

Taking a Break

I've read more than one story in which someone secretly plans a vacation for a spouse, but never actually believed that anyone could do it in real life. So I was truly surprised when my husband presented me with plane tickets to Bermuda on the day before our twentieth wedding anniversary. Since Marshal hates to fly, I'd ruled out any kind of air travel and thought we were planning a trip to the mountains where some good friends have a vacation house.

The time we spent on the beach was a welcome rest from the hustle-and-bustle of our normal lives (though the list I brought back of things to take care of was a reminder of what we left behind). Marshal and I watched the ocean flow in and out, ate too much, read some good books, and reminisced about our courtship and wedding, vacations we've taken since, the early days of our marriage, the early days of child raising and so forth. We even found some stories from our respective childhoods that we'd never shared. We played some Scrabble, did some puzzles and just had fun together. It was a good reminder that my life is much more than what I do for a living.